ECLECTIC ENGLISH CLASSICS

THE PROLOGUE

AND

THE KNIGHTES TALE

BY GEOFFREY CHAUCER

EDITED BY A. M. VAN DYKE, M.A.
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH, CINCINNATI HIGH SCHOOL

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INTRODUCTION.

THE parentage, date of birth, and many other details in the life of Geoffrey Chaucer, the "Father of English Poetry," are involved in more or less obscurity, and those mentioned in the following brief biography, although in accordance with the best authorities, must not all be regarded as unquestionably established. He was born probably in 1340 (not in 1328, as formerly believed). His father was John Chaucer, a wealthy vintner, evidently of some social standing, since in 1338 he was in attendance on King Edward III. Geoffrey was liberally educated. Both Cambridge and Oxford claim him as a student, and it is probable that he attended both universities, a practice not uncommon with scholars of his day. "At the period of his leaving Oxford," says Leland, "he was already an acute dialectician, a persuasive orator, an elegant poet, a grave philosopher, an able mathematician, and an accomplished divine."

In 1357 he was in the king's service as page in the household of Lionel, third son of Edward III.; and in 1359 he served in the army that invaded France, where he was taken prisoner, but soon after released, the king paying sixteen pounds toward his ransom.

During the next seven years no mention is made of him in any

of the records. Still, it is probable that he was active during this time, since in 1367 a life pension of twenty marks was granted him for services rendered and to be rendered his sovereign. In the same year he was appointed valet of the king's chamber,—a position of no mean honor. In 1368, on the death of Prince Lionel, he entered the service of the latter's brother, John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, who became the poet's best friend and patron. About this time he is believed to have married Philippa Roet, eldest daughter of Sir Payne Roet, and sister of Catherine Roet, who later became the third wife of the duke of Lancaster.

From this time for many years his name appears frequently in the public records. An interesting entry is that of April 23, 1374, when a pitcher of wine daily was granted him for life, to be delivered into his hands by the king's butler. This was a perquisite of what came to be in later years the office of poet laureate. Between the years 1370 and 1380 he was sent abroad upon several different diplomatic missions. In the second of these, in 1372 and 1373, he is thought to have visited the poet Petrarch, at that time living near Padua. (See Prologue to "The Clerkes Tale.")

The public services of Chaucer were not confined to diplomacy, for he held important positions in the civil service of the government. In 1374 he was appointed controller of the customs of wool, skins, and leather at the port of London. This was by no means a sinecure, as he was required to keep the records in person. He no doubt earned the appointment by previous services earnestly and properly performed. To this office there was added, in 1382, the controllership of petty customs, and in 1385 he was allowed the rare privilege of having a

deputy to perform his duties as controller. In 1386 he was elected knight of the shire of Kent, in the Parliament held at Westminster; but later in the same year, for some not definitely explained cause, he gave up or was dismissed from his offices. It may be mentioned as a coincidence that his patron, John of Gaunt, sailed in August of this year to Spain, and it is possible that during his absence political influence of an adverse character operated to deprive Chaucer of his offices. This seems likely because in 1389, when Henry of Lancaster, son of John of Gaunt, had become a power in the government, Chaucer was made clerk of the king's works at Westminster and at as many as fifteen other places in personal possession of the crown. At any rate, his fortunes seem to have risen and fallen with those of the house of Lancaster. In 1394 he was granted by King Richard II. a pension of twenty pounds a year for life. It appears that in the succeeding years of his life he was in financial distress, as he often drew his pension in advance, and letters of protection were issued against his arrest and imprisonment for debt.

Although the granting of the pension of twenty pounds for life, and a tun of wine yearly, indicates that Richard II. was not unfriendly to the poet, his fortunes did not take a decided turn for the better until the accession of Henry IV., in 1399; then his pension was at once doubled.

But this new era of prosperity was not to be of long continuance. In 1399 Chaucer took a fifty-three years' lease of a house in the garden of St. Mary's Chapel in Westminster, where he died in 1400. "He was buried in the great cathedral near which in his last days he lived. He was the first, and for centuries the only one, of the many men of letters whose mortal

remains have found a resting place in this great mausoleum of the illustrious dead of England."

The following description of Chaucer's personality is taken from Charles Cowden Clarke's "Life of Chaucer":

"The person of Chaucer was of middle stature, in advanced years inclining to corpulency. His face was full and smooth, betokening regular, good health and a serene and cheerful frame of mind. His complexion was fair, verging toward paleness; his hair was of a dusky yellow, short and thin; that of his beard grew—or rather, perhaps, it was fashioned—into a forked shape, and its color was wheaten. He had an expansive and marble-like forehead, fair and unwrinkled; his eyes constantly tended toward the ground. The general expression of his countenance combined a mixture of animation, of lurking good-natured satire, of unruffled serenity, sweetness, and close thought. His features were an index of his temper, and this comprised a mixture of the lively, grave, and modest. Yet was the gayety of his disposition more prominent in his writings than in his general demeanor, which, it may be, was repressed by his modesty.

"During his relaxations from the duties of public business he continually retired to his study. Reading, indeed, was his chief delight, as appears, by his own confession, in the introduction to his 'Dream' and to the 'Legend of Good Women.' He preferred it to every amusement, with the exception of a morning walk in Maytide. He lived almost exclusively in his own world of meditation, never interfering, as he says of himself, in the concerns of others. He was temperate and regular in his diet; he 'arose with the lark, and lay down with the lamb': hence the marvelous truth and freshness of his early morning pictures.

"The career of Chaucer, from whichever point we view it, as-

sumes a character elevated above that of ordinary men. He was a poet, a philosopher, an astronomer, a logician, a linguist, a politician, a theologian, a humanist, a gentleman in the modern acceptation of the term, and a virtuous man. His conduct as a man holding a public office stands unimpeached for integrity. He was a gentleman, for he was the universal theme of admiration in a refined court, particularly by the women, and they rarely err in making a correct estimate of a man's temper and habits."

It is almost entirely as a poet, however, and as the poet of real life, that Chaucer commands our attention and secures our admiration. Like Shakespeare, Chaucer invented almost nothing. Whatever he found of use to him he took, and made of it as purely an original thing as if he himself had first found or invented it. As has been before remarked, he was a man of wide reading, and his æsthetic temperament and dramatic insight led him to discern whatever there was of poetic value in mediæval song, priestly legend, romance of chivalry, tales of travelers, fable, or allegory; but whatever he took from others as a basis of his literary work he ennobled by his genius until the original was eclipsed by the imperishable form into which he fashioned it.

The earlier literary life of Chaucer shows little English influence, except perhaps in the way of suggestion of subject. John Gower (1330–1408) was his contemporary and personal friend; but Gower was himself an imitator, and it is more probable that Gower owes his reputation to his connection with Chaucer than that Chaucer owes any part of his fame to his association with Gower. "The Tale of the Man of Lawe" and "The Tale of the Wyf of Bathe," which are supposed by some to have been borrowed by Chaucer from Gower, were common property which had come down from past ages in the form of popular legends;

and it is not even certain that Gower had incorporated them in his tedious "Confessio Amantis" before Chaucer put them into the form in which they afterwards appeared in his "Canterbury Tales." Moreover, Chaucer had established his standing as a great and original national poet long before Gower had published his first English poem; and it is more likely that the latter profited by imitating, as well as he could, the style of Chaucer, than that Chaucer was, in that respect at least, influenced by Gower.

Another of his contemporaries was William Langland (1330–1400), author of the alliterative poem, "The Vision of Piers Plowman." The vices of the nobility and the clergy, the abuses and corruptions in government and church, are the theme of his verses, presented to us in allegorical form. "It is a querulous, somber, harsh, and gloomy picture, such as would appeal to the middle classes, who, with their wealth, had not acquired strength of character enough to resist successfully the oppressions of their political and priestly masters." If Chaucer saw anything in "The Vision of Piers Plowman," he saw what to avoid, both in matter and in manner. As a discreet man of the world, and closely associated with nobles, princes, and kings, he would of course avoid all hostile comment on the doings of the lords temporal, and no mention is made by him of the lords spiritual of the time. If he satirizes the vices of the clergy, he does it in such a good-humored way that the sting of it is softened by its geniality. Moreover, "the circulation of 'The Vision of Piers Plowman' among the educated classes was obstructed by its poetic form; for the deliberate opinion and taste of the educated public had condemned alliterative and rhythmic verses as a barbaric relic of an age of inferior culture."

Another of his great contemporaries was John Wyclif (1324–1384). "As a theologian he was the most eminent of his day, as a philosopher second to none, and as a schoolman incomparable." His writings, in the homely speech of the humble classes, were an intellectual stimulus to the common people, but they were not read or studied as models of literary style. Chaucer doubtless sympathized with the aims of both the secular priest who has given us "The Vision of Piers Plowman," and the eminent theologian and lecturer at Oxford who has given us the first English Bible,—as much, at least, as one moving in aristocratic circles could, and it is reasonably certain that a man of his keenness of mind would avail himself of whatever aid their writings could bring him; but it seems that this aid was rather linguistic than purely literary.

From these considerations, then, it may appear that the earliest literary influence upon Chaucer came from abroad. It is a reasonable conjecture that he was as well acquainted with Norman French, the court language, as he was with his native tongue, and he must have been familiar with the writings of contemporary French authors and of those who immediately preceded them.

Among his works of this period are "The Romaunt of the Rose," "The Book of the Duchesse," an entirely original poem, and a few minor pieces. He is, however, much more indebted to the prose writers than to the poets of France. The plot of "The Tale of the Man of Lawe" is borrowed from a French romance; that of "The Nonne Preestes Tale" from a French fable. It may, indeed, be not too much to say that French influence is found here and there, in a greater or less degree, throughout Chaucer's poetry. Taine implies that his genius is more essentially French than English.

Somewhat later in his literary life there appears a period of Italian influence. The Italian writers of this period were the greatest of the age, and have maintained their supremacy in Italian literature up to the present time. Whatever doubt may be expressed as to the direct influence of French authors on Chaucer's poetry, there is none as to the inspiration which he received from the great Italians, Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio. In line 335 of "The Monkes Tale" he speaks of Petrarch as "my maister Petrark." "The Clerkes Tale" of patient Griseldis is from the Latin prose of Petrarch, who translated it from the "Decameron." From Boccaccio he borrows more than from either of the others, but mostly or entirely from his *poetry*. The "Teseide" of Boccaccio is the basis of "The Knightes Tale," which is, however, by no means a translation. The former contains 9896 lines, and the latter only 2250, and of these but 270 are literal translations, 374 are paraphrases, and 132 have only a little resemblance. The remaining two thirds of the poem is Chaucer's own invention. The "Troilus and Criseyde" of Chaucer is founded upon the "Filostrato" of Boccaccio, and he uses, as in "The Knightes Tale," about one third of the original, and at the same time expands it from 5704 lines to 8239 lines.

If Chaucer invented little, "he touched nothing that he did not adorn;" and originality consists more in the treatment of a story than in aught else. "That the poet himself should furnish his own materials as well as fashion them is no more necessary than that the sculptor should be under the necessity of personally digging the marble out of which he carves his statue."

"No poetry was ever more human than Chaucer's; none ever came more frankly and genially home to its readers. The first note of his song is a note of freshness and gladness."

"Chaucer himself is in all his original works: hopeless and sad in his early poems, bright and humorful in his later ones, poor and suppliant in his last. Among his chief characteristics are his delightful freshness and simplicity, his roguish, genial humor, —he was full of quaint fun,—his heartfelt love of nature, his tender pathos, his knowledge of women,—the naughty he quizzed in most happy style, and the good he honored and praised with all his might,—his love of his dear old books, his power of life-like portraiture, his admirable story-telling, and the perfection of his verse. Chaucer's ardent love of nature is everywhere apparent. Even his love and reverence for books gave way before an eager desire to enjoy the beauties of nature in that season of the year when all around him was manifesting life and loveliness" (MORRIS).

Chaucer was essentially an epic poet,—one of the few really great story-tellers. He has been styled the "English Ennius" and the "English Homer," but, better than all, he is acknowledged to be the "Father of English Poetry;" and both in the long line of succeeding great names in English literature, and those of his own time, we find him mentioned with admiration, even with veneration, imitated, quoted, and translated, or rather modernized, into "very pretty poetry, perhaps, but not Chaucer." His is the "art that conceals art." If there had been no Shakespeare, Chaucer's name would surely be the greatest in our literature.

"It is strange that such a voice as this should have awakened no echo in the singers that follow; but the first burst of English song died as suddenly and utterly with Chaucer as the hope and glory of his age. The hundred years that follow the brief sunshine of Crécy and the 'Canterbury Tales' are years of the

deepest gloom; no age of our history is so sad and somber as the age which we traverse from Edward III. to Joan of Arc."

Chaucer's greatest work, the "Canterbury Tales," was not put together until 1386. "It is to this work that he owes his fame and rank as the first poet of modern English literature, and in this work—the result of years of labor and study—the genius and power of the poet are best expressed." The "Canterbury Tales" form an unfinished work. In fact, the plan as originally laid out in the Prologue is beyond the compass of any merely human endeavor. We have no means of knowing positively at what different times the several tales were written, and we are alike ignorant as to the date of the Prologue, though it was probably written not earlier than 1386. It has been the humor of some to find that the plan of the work was taken from the "Decameron" of Boccaccio, whereas it may be questioned whether Chaucer received even a suggestion from the work of Boccaccio. In the latter all the characters are of the same social standing, and there is none of the dramatic interest attaching to them or their stories that we find in the great work of Chaucer. Instead of a small company of fashionable young men and women shutting themselves off from the world, Chaucer presents us to a large company, thirty-two in all, in various ranks of life, journeying together upon a pious pilgrimage to the shrine of the "holy blissful martir," Thomas à Becket, at Canterbury. To beguile the time, stories are told by these pilgrims, and these are bound together by incidents, generally narrated in the separate prologues, in such a way as to give to the whole a sort of dramatic unity.

In the Prologue, Chaucer lays before us the general plan of the work, and introduces us to the several characters. He represents himself as meeting at the Tabard Inn in Southwark

(opposite London) twenty-nine pilgrims bound for Canterbury. Being on the same errand himself, he joins them, and the host of the inn decides also to make one of the party.[1] The latter presides over the company, and suggests that the pilgrims shorten the way by telling each four stories, two on the way to, and two more on the way from, Canterbury, it being agreed that the one whose tale pleased best should receive a supper at the common cost.

"After a brief introduction, filled with the most cheerful images of spring, the season of the pilgrimage, the poet commences the narrative with a description of the person and the character of each member of the party. This description extends to about seven hundred lines, and of course affords space for a very spirited and graphic portrayal of the physical aspect and an outline of the moral features of each. This latter part of the description is generally more rapidly sketched, because it was a part of the author's plan to allow his personages to bring out their special traits of character, and thus to depict and individualize themselves, in the interludes between the tales. The selection of the pilgrims is evidently made with reference to this object of development in action, and therefore constitutes an essential feature of the plot. We have persons of all the ranks not too far removed from each other by artificial distinctions to be supposed capable of associating upon that footing of temporary equality which is the law of good fellowship among travelers bound on the same journey and accidentally brought together. All the great classes of English humanity are thus represented, and opportunity is given for the display of the harmonies and the jeal-

[1] The canon's yeoman, who joined the party seven miles from London, made up the number of thirty-two pilgrims.

ousies which now united, now divided, the interests of different orders and different vocations in the commonwealth. The clerical pilgrims, it will be observed, are proportionately very numerous. The exposure of the corruptions of the church was doubtless a leading aim with the poet; and if the whole series, which was designed to extend to at least one hundred and twenty-eight tales, had been completed, the criminations and recriminations of the jealous ecclesiastics would have exhibited the whole profession in an unenviable light.

"None of these sketches, I believe, has ever been traced to a foreign source; and they are so thoroughly national that it is hardly possible to suppose that any imagination but that of an Englishman could have conceived them. In the first introduction of the individuals described in the prologues to the several stories, and in the dialogues which occur at the pauses between the tales,—wherever, in short, the narrators appear in their own persons,—the characters are as well marked and discriminated, and as harmonious and consistent in action, as in the best comedies of modern times" (MARSH).

A poem on the same subject as "The Knightes Tale" was originally written by Chaucer as a separate work, under the title of "Al the love of Palamon and Arcyte of Thebes thogh the storye ys knowen lyte." The story of this poem is as follows:

Theseus, returning home to Athens with his bride Hippolyta and her young sister Emily, is met by a party of women, suppliants for his help. They implore him to punish the wicked tyrant Creon, who cruelly refuses burial to the bodies of their husbands, slain in the siege of Thebes. Theseus thereupon at once sets out for Thebes, kills Creon, and brings back two prisoners, Palamon and Arcite, cousins and sworn "brothers in arms,"

both of the royal line of Thebes. These he imprisons in a tower of his castle. Looking from the window of this tower one May morning, Palamon sees Emily picking flowers. Overcome with admiration, he points her out to Arcite, who at once falls in love with her. A quarrel ensues. Each is sworn to aid the other in his love adventures, but each maintains that he loved Emily first. Palamon saw her first, but, as Arcite asserts, took her for a goddess, while Arcite at once loved her as a mortal woman.

Arcite, by private influence with Theseus, is released, on condition that he shall leave Athens forever, under penalty of death for returning. Nevertheless he does return, disguised as a servant, in which capacity he engages in the service of Emily. After six years of captivity, Palamon, too, secures his liberty, escaping by night and fleeing to a wood. Here, in the morning, he encounters Arcite. Indignant reproaches follow. Arcite brings him arms, and the next day they meet to settle their claim to Emily by single combat. Theseus, however, sees them fighting, rides up, and interferes. At first he threatens both with death, but, relenting, grants them a year to gather each a troop of one hundred picked knights. At the end of this time they are to meet in a great tournament, the winner to have Emily for his wife.

Preparations are made, and at last the great day comes, and the two champions appear, each with his hundred knights. Both seek help from the gods. Arcite prays to Mars, asking for victory in the battle; Palamon, to Venus, for success in love. Both are led to believe by signs that their prayers will be granted, and they confidently prepare for battle. Meanwhile the gods have devised a plan to keep their promises to both. Arcite has his wish: he wins the battle; but as he rides along the lists, pre-

pared to claim his reward, his horse throws him, and he is fatally injured. He dies holding Emily's hand and commending to her his rival Palamon. His body is burned with imposing ceremonies. At the end of a year of mourning Theseus summons Palamon to Athens and gives him Emily for his wife. So the prayers of both have been answered. Arcite has been victorious in battle, Palamon in love.

To read Chaucer and to understand his structural forms is not a difficult task, and he who learns to read him easily and fluently is richly rewarded for his labors. The language in his period had lost the greatest number of the inflectional forms of the Anglo-Saxon, and there had been added to it during the three centuries of Norman rule a considerable number of words from the Norman French, which language, as before remarked, was certainly as familiar to Chaucer as the English of his day.

The grammar of this language, and the rules for its pronunciation, as set forth by Tyrwhitt, are probably as nearly correct as can now be determined. According to this authority, there remained but one of the six declensions of the Anglo-Saxon, and of the great variety of cases of nouns there was left only the genitive, which was formed from the nominative by adding *es;* and the same form expresses the plural in all cases, e.g.: Nominative, *lond;* genitive, *londes;* plural, *londes.* Nom., *name;* gen., *names;* plural, *names.* Nom., *man;* gen., *mannes;* plural, *mannes.*

The personal pronouns were declined as follows: Nom., *I*, *Ich*, *Ik*, *we;* gen., *min* (*myn*), *mi* (*my*), *our*, *oure;* dat. and acc., *me*, *us.* Nom., *thou* (*thow*), *ye;* gen., *thin* (*thyn*), *thi* (*thy*), *your*, *youre;* dat. and acc., *thee*, *the*, *yow*, *you.* Nom., *he*, *she*, *hit*, *it*, *thei*, *they;* gen., *his*, *hire*, *hir*, *here* (*her*, *hir*); dat. and acc., *him*, *hir*, *hire*,

here, *hit*, *it*, *hem*. *Who* was both relative and interrogative, as now, and had a genitive, *whos*, and an accusative, *whom*, but no variety of number; while the demonstratives *this* and *that* had plural forms, *thise* and *tho*, but no case. *Eyther*, *neyther*, *other* (Latin, *alter*), had plurals regularly formed by adding *es; other* (Latin, *alius*) had a genitive case and plural number after the analogy of nouns. *Aller* was the genitive plural of *alle*.

Verbs had four modes, and but two principal tenses, present and past. Varieties of mode and tense were expressed by auxiliaries. The inflection of verbs differed but little from the present custom. The termination *-en* signified the plural of a finite verb as well as of the infinitive mode, and the past participle ended in *ed*, *d*, or *t*, except in strong verbs, in which it ended in *en* or *e*, e.g., "So had I *spoken*."

The auxiliary verbs were used in the two primary tenses in the indicative and subjunctive modes. They were prefixed to the infinitive of the principal verb, and inflected as other verbs, e.g.: I *shall*, *will* (*wol*) *loven*. I *may* (*mow*), *can* (*con*) *loven*. We *shullen*, *willen* (*wollen*), *connen loven*. In the past tense, I *shulde* (*shulled*), *wolde* (*wulled*), *mighte* (*moughte*), *coude loven*. The auxiliary *to haven* was used as a prefix to form perfect and pluperfect tenses. The auxiliary *to ben* ("to be") was used to form the passive voice of all verbs.

A few verbs from the French, notwithstanding the fact that when they were adopted into the English language they lost all their differences of conjugation, retained the termination *-ant* of the present participle.

The past participle of weak, or regular, verbs had the Anglo-Saxon ending *-d* or *-ed*, and of strong, irregular, verbs the ending *-en* or *-e*, to which was frequently prefixed the particle *i* or *y*.

The negatives were: *nam* for *ne am*, am not; *nis* for *ne is*, is not; *nas*, was not; *nere*, were not; *nadde*, *nad*, had not, *nath*, hath not; *nil*, *nille*, will not; *nolde*, would not; *noot*, know not; *niste*, knew not; *ne — ne*, neither — nor.

Final *e* was a separate syllable, except in personal pronouns, but was elided before a word beginning with a vowel or an *h* mute, unless the exigencies of the meter prevented. Final *es*, *ed*, *en*, *de* were generally pronounced. Words of French origin were accented upon the ultimate or penultimate syllable.

The Prologue to the "Canterbury Tales," the separate prologues to each tale, and most of the tales in verse ("The Tale of Melibeus" and "The Persones Tale" are in prose) are written in iambic pentameter verse with riming couplets. Often we find lines of eleven syllables, the last being unaccented, and occasionally a line of nine syllables.

There are no less than seven different MSS. of Chaucer's works, which differ considerably in the spelling and to some extent in the wording. The text in this book is taken from the edition by Rev. Richard Morris, LL.D., which is based mainly on the Ellesmere MS.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.[1]

1340. Birth of Chaucer.

1349. First great pestilence in England.
Order of the Garter instituted.

1357. Chaucer becomes a page in the household of Prince Lionel.

1359. Chaucer serves with the army of Edward III. in France, and is taken prisoner.

1360. Chaucer is ransomed and set free.

1361. Second great pestilence in England.

1362. Langland's "The Vision of Piers Plowman" is begun.

1363. Chaucer writes "The Romaunt of the Rose."

1367. Chaucer serves as valet in the king's household; he receives a pension of twenty marks per year; he writes "Compleynte to Pité."

1368. Chaucer enters the service of the duke of Lancaster; marries Philippa Roet (?).

1369. Third great pestilence in England.
Chaucer writes "The Book of the Duchesse."

1370–1380. Chaucer is sent abroad on several diplomatic missions.

1372–1373. Chaucer visits Petrarch in Italy.

1374. Chaucer is appointed controller of customs of wool, etc., at London; receives a grant of a pitcher of wine daily; writes "The Parlement of Foules."

[1] The dates of the first appearance of Chaucer's poems as given in this table are only conjectural and approximate.

1375. Chaucer writes "The Compleynte of Mars."

1377. Death of Edward III. and accession of Richard II. to the throne of England.

Langland's "The Vision of Piers Plowman" is revised.

1380. Wyclif's translation of the Bible appears.

Chaucer writes "Troilus and Criseyde."

1381. Wat Tyler's Rebellion.

1382. Chaucer is appointed controller of petty customs.

1384. Chaucer writes "The Compleynte of Venus" and "The House of Fame."

Death of Wyclif.

1385. Chaucer writes "Legend of Good Women."

1386. Chaucer is elected knight of the shire of Kent in Westminster; he loses his offices; begins "Canterbury Tales."

Gower writes "Confessio Amantis."

1387. Death of Chaucer's wife.

1389. Chaucer is appointed clerk of the king's works at Westminster and other places.

1391. Chaucer writes "Anelida and Arcite" and "Treatise on the Astrolabe."

1394. King Richard II. grants Chaucer a pension of twenty pounds a year for life.

1398. Chaucer is granted a tun of wine per year.

1399. Accession of Henry IV. to the throne of England.

Chaucer writes Envoy to "Compleynte to Pité;" his pension is doubled by Henry IV.; he takes a lease of a house in the garden of St. Mary's Chapel in Westminster.

Death of John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster.

1400. Death of Chaucer.

CHAUCER.

THE PROLOGUE.

WHAN that Aprille[1] with his shoures soote[2]
The droghte of Marche hath perced to the roote,
And bathed every veyne in swich[3] licour,
Of which vertu[4] engendred[5] is the flour;[6]
Whan Zephirus[7] eek[8] with his swete[9] breeth
Inspired hath in every holt[10] and heeth[10]
The tendre croppes,[11] and the yonge sonne[12]
Hath in the Ram[13] his halfe cours y-ronne,[14]
And smale fowles maken melodye,
That slepen al the night with open yë
(So priketh[15] hem[16] nature in hir[17] corages[18]):
Than longen folk to goon on pilgrimages,
And palmers[19] for to seken straunge strondes,[20]
To ferne halwes,[21] couthe[22] in sondry londes;

[1] A trisyllable. [2] Sweet. [3] Such. [4] Force; influence. [5] Produced. [6] Flower. [7] The west wind in spring. [8] Also. [9] Sweet. [10] Grove and meadow. [11] Buds. [12] The sun is called young because just beginning his yearly course. [13] The first constellation of the zodiac. [14] Past participle of the verb *ronnen*, "to run;" the prefix *y-* or *i-* indicates this form of the verb. Cf. the German *ge*. [15] Urgeth. [16] Them. [17] Their. [18] Hearts or spirits. [19] Those who went to the Holy Land and brought back with them palm branches as an evidence of their pilgrimage. [20] Foreign shores. [21] Distant shrines. [22] Past participle of *conne*, "to know," from Anglo-Saxon *cunnan*.

And specially, from every shires ende
Of Engelond, to Caunterbury they wende,[1]
The holy blisful martir[2] for to seke,
That hem hath holpen, whan that they were seke.

Bifel[3] that, in that sesoun on a day,
In Southwerk at the Tabard[4] as I lay
Redy to wenden on my pilgrimage
To Caunterbury with ful devout corage,
At night was come in-to that hostelrye
Wel nyne and twenty in a compaignye,
Of sondry folk, by aventure y-falle[5]
In felawshipe, and pilgrims were they alle,
That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde;
The chambres and the stables weren wyde,
And wel we weren esed atte beste.[6]
And shortly, whan the sonne was to reste,
So hadde I spoken with hem everichon,[7]
That I was of hir felawshipe anon,
And made forward[8] erly for to ryse,
To take our wey, ther as I yow devyse.[9]

But natheles, whyl I have tyme and space,
Er[10] that I ferther in this tale pace,
Me thinketh it acordaunt to resoun,[11]
To telle yow al the condicioun
Of ech of hem, so as it semed me,
And whiche they weren, and of what degree;
And eek in what array that they were inne:
And at a knight than wol I first biginne.

[1] Go. [2] Thomas à Becket. [3] Happened. [4] A sleeveless jacket worn by heralds, the sign and name of the inn where Chaucer's pilgrims met. [5] Fallen by chance. [6] Entertained in the best manner. "Atte," at the. [7] Every one. [8] Made haste. It seems that the word may have been written "forwerde" (see lines 829, 848, 852). [9] To the place I tell you of. "Ther," where. [10] Ere; before. [11] It seems to me in accordance with reason. "Me" is dative case. "Thinketh" is from Anglo-Saxon *thyncan*, "to seem;" "to think" is from *thencan*. Cf. "semed me," line 39.

A KNIGHT ther was, and that a worthy[1] man,
That fro the tyme that he first bigan
To ryden out, he loved chivalrye,[2]
Trouthe and honour, fredom and curteisye.
Ful worthy was he in his lordes werre,[3]
And therto hadde he riden (no man ferre[4])
As wel in cristendom as hethenesse,[5]
And evere honoured for his worthinesse.
At Alisaundre[6] he was, whan it was wonne;
Ful ofte tyme he hadde the bord bigonne[7]
Aboven alle naciouns in Pruce.[8]
In Lettow[9] hadde he reysed and in Ruce,[10]
No cristen man so ofte of his degree.
In Gernade[11] at the sege eek hadde he be
Of Algezir,[12] and riden in Belmarye.[13]
At Lyeys[14] was he, and at Satalye,[15]
Whan they were wonne; and in the Grete See[16]
At many a noble aryve[17] hadde he be.
At mortal batailles hadde he been fiftene,
And foughten for our feith[18] at Tramissene[19]
In listes thryes, and ay slayn his foo.
This ilke[20] worthy knight hadde been also

[1] Honorable; distinguished. So in line 47. [2] Knighthood and all its adventures. [3] Wars. Final *e* denotes the plural. [4] Comparative degree of *fer*, "far." Superlative degree is *ferreste* (see line 494). [5] Heathen lands. [6] Alexandria, captured by the king of Cyprus in 1365. [7] "Bord," etc., is uncertain in meaning. Some interpret it "board" or "table." Marsh suggests that it is from Low German *boort*, a "tournament." [8] Prussia. [9] Lithuania. [10] Russia. [11] Grenada. When an English knight was seeking adventures, he went to the Continent to serve with the Teutonic Knights. This was considered most honorable service. [12] This city (on the southern coast of Spain, near Cape Trafalgar) was taken from the Moors in 1344. [13] A Moorish kingdom in Africa. [14] A town in Armenia, captured from the Turks in 1367. [15] Attalia, captured in 1352. Now Adalia, Asia Minor. [16] The eastern part of the Mediterranean. [17] Disembarkation of troops. Some texts have "armee." [18] The Christian faith. [19] Tramessen, a Moorish kingdom in Africa. [20] Same. Cf. modern expression "of that ilk."

Somtyme with the lord of Palatye,[1]
Ageyn another hethen in Turkye:
And everemore he hadde a sovereyn prys.[2]
And though that he were worthy,[3] he was wys,
And of his port[4] as meek as is a mayde.
He nevere yet no vileinye[5] ne sayde
In al his lyf, un-to no maner wight.[6]
He was a verray parfit gentil knight.
But for to tellen yow of his array,
His hors were goode, but he was nat gay.
Of fustian[7] he wered a gipoun[8]
Al bismotered[9] with his habergeoun.[10]
For he was late y-come from his viage,[11]
And wente for to doon his pilgrimage.[12]
With him ther was his sone, a yong SQUYER,[13]
A lovyer, and a lusty bacheler,[14]
With lokkes crulle,[15] as they were leyd in presse.
Of twenty yeer of age he was, I gesse.
Of his stature he was of evene lengthe,[16]
And wonderly delivere,[17] and greet of strengthe.
And he hadde been somtyme in chivachye,[18]
In Flaundres, in Artoys, and Picardye,
And born him wel, as of so litel space,[19]
In hope to stonden in his lady grace.[20]
Embrouded[21] was he, as it were a mede[22]
Al ful of fresshe floures, whyte and rede.

[1] Palathia in Asia Minor. [2] The highest praise. [3] Here means "brave" (see Note 1, p. 25). [4] Carriage; manner. Note the simile. [5] Conduct, especially language, unbecoming a gentleman. The word is from French *vilain*. Trace present meaning. [6] No kind of person whatever. [7] Coarse cloth. [8] A short cloak. [9] Stained. [10] Coat of mail. [11] Travels as a knight. [12] To pay his vows at the shrine of a saint, and be absolved from bloodguiltiness. [13] Attendant upon, and serving a sort of apprenticeship to, a knight. [14] An aspirant for knighthood. [15] Curled. [16] Of average height. [17] Very active. [18] Military expeditions; raids. [19] Considering the short time. [20] In his lady's favor. [21] Embroidered, as to his garments. [22] A meadow.

Singinge he was, or floytinge,[1] al the day;
He was as fresh as is the month of May.
Short was his goune, with sleves longe and wyde.
Wel coude he sitte on hors, and faire ryde.
He coude songes make and wel endyte,
Iuste and eek daunce, and wel purtreye and wryte.
So hote he lovede, that by nightertale[2]
He sleep namore than doth a nightingale.
Curteys he was, lowly, and servisable,
And carf[3] biforn his fader at the table.

A YEMAN[4] hadde he, and servaunts namo
At that tyme, for him liste[5] ryde so;
And he was clad in cote and hood of grene;
A sheef of pecok arwes brighte and kene
Under his belt he bar ful thriftily
(Wel coude he dresse[6] his takel[7] yemanly:
His arwes drouped noght with fetheres lowe)
And in his hand he bar a mighty bowe.
A not-heed[8] hadde he, with a broun visage.
Of wode-craft wel coude he al the usage.
Upon his arm he bar a gay bracer,[9]
And by his syde a swerd and a bokeler,
And on that other syde a gay daggere,
Harneised wel, and sharp as point of spere;
A Cristofre[10] on his brest of silver shene.[11]
An horn he bar, the bawdrik[12] was of grene;
A forster[13] was he, soothly, as I gesse.
Ther was also a Nonne,[14] a PRIORESSE,[15]
That of hir smyling was ful simple and coy;
Hir gretteste ooth was but by sëynt Loy;[16]

[1] Playing on a flute. [2] Nighttime. [3] Carved. [4] Yeoman, a servant ranking above a groom. [5] It pleased. [6] Direct. [7] Arrows. [8] Head round like a nut. [9] A protection for the arm. French *bras*. Cf. "bracelet." [10] An image of St. Christopher. [11] Bright; shining. [12] A belt. [13] Forester. [14] Nun. [15] Head of a convent. [16] St. Louis or St. Eligius.

And she was cleped[1] madame Eglentyne.
Ful wel she song the service divyne,
Entuned in hir nose ful semely;
And Frensh she spak ful faire and fetisly,[2]
After the scole of Stratford atte Bowe,
For Frensh of Paris was to hir unknowe.[3]
At mete[4] wel y-taught was she with-alle;
She leet no morsel from hir lippes falle,
Ne wette hir fingres in hir sauce depe.
Wel coude she carie a morsel, and wel kepe,
That no[5] drope ne[5] fille up-on hir brest.
In curteisye[6] was set ful moche hir lest.[7]
Hir over lippe wyped she so clene,
That in hir coppe was no ferthing[8] sene
Of grece, whan she dronken hadde hir draughte.
Ful semely after hir mete she raughte,[9]
And sikerly[10] she was of greet disport,[11]
And ful plesaunt, and amiable of port,
And peyned[12] hir to countrefete chere[13]
Of court, and been estatlich[14] of manere,
And to ben holden digne[15] of reverence.
But, for to speken of hir conscience,
She was so charitable and so pitous,
She wolde wepe, if that she sawe a mous
Caught in a trappe, if it were deed or bledde.
Of smale houndes[16] had she, that she fedde
With rosted flesh, or milk and wastel breed.[17]
But sore weep she if oon of hem were deed,
Or if men smoot[18] it with a yerde[19] smerte:[20]
And al was conscience and tendre herte.

[1] Called. [2] Cleverly. [3] Unknown. Chaucer laughs at the French spoken in England. [4] At table. [5] The two negatives did not make an affirmative. [6] Good manners. [7] Delight. [8] A small part; literally, a fourth. [9] Reached. [10] Surely. [11] Gayety. [12] Took pains. [13] To imitate the manner. [14] Dignified. [15] Worthy. [16] Lapdogs. [17] Bread made of finest flour. [18] Smote; struck. [19] Stick. [20] Smartly.

Ful semely[1] hir wimpel[2] pinched[3] was;
Hir nose tretys;[4] hir eyen greye as glas;
Hir mouth ful smal, and ther-to softe and reed;
But sikerly she hadde a fair forheed.
It was almost a spanne brood, I trowe;
For, hardily,[5] she was nat undergrowe.
Ful fetis[6] was hir cloke, as I was war.
Of smal coral aboute hir arm she bar
A peire of bedes,[7] gauded[8] al with grene;
And ther-on heng a broche of gold ful shene,
On which ther was first write a crowned[9] A,
And after, *Amor vincit omnia*.[10]
Another NONNE with hir hadde she,
That was hir chapeleyne,[11] and PREESTES thre.
A MONK ther was, a fair for the maistrye,[12]
An out-rydere,[13] that lovede venerye;[14]
A manly man, to been an abbot able.
Ful many a deyntee[15] hors hadde he in stable:
And, whan he rood, men mighte his brydel here
Ginglen[16] in a whistling wynd as clere,
And eek as loude as doth the chapel-belle,
Ther[17] as this lord was keper of the celle.
The reule of seint Maure[18] or of seint Beneit,[18]
By-cause that it was old and som-del streit,[19]
This ilke monk leet olde thinges pace,
And held after the newe world the space.[20]
He yaf[21] nat of[22] that text a pulled hen,[23]
That seith, that hunters been nat holy men;

[1] Becomingly. [2] Covering for the neck. [3] Folded. [4] Well shaped. [5] Certainly. [6] Neat. [7] Rosary. [8] The gauds were the larger beads. [9] The A was crowned to signify that *amor*, love, was the greatest of all the virtues. [10] Love conquers all things. [11] Secretary. Tyrwhitt regards lines 163, 164, as spurious. [12] "A fair," etc., implies superior excellence. [13] A hard rider. [14] Hunting. [15] Valuable. [16] Bells were hung on the bridles of horses. [17] Where that. [18] St. Maur was a disciple of St. Benedict. [19] Somewhat strict. [20] Trace, or path. [21] Gave. [22] For. [23] A molting, therefore worthless hen.

Ne that a monk, whan he is cloisterlees,[1]
Is likned til a fish that is waterlees;
This is to seyn, a monk out of his cloistre.
But thilke text held he nat worth an oistre.
And I seyde his opinioun was good.
What sholde he studie, and make him-selven wood,[2]
Upon a book in cloistre alwey to poure,
Or swinken[3] with his handes, and laboure,
As Austin bit?[4] How shal the world be served?
Lat Austin have his swink to him reserved.
Therfor he was a pricasour[5] aright;
Grehoundes he hadde, as swifte as fowel in flight;
Of priking and of hunting for the hare
Was al his lust, for no cost wolde he spare.
I seigh[6] his sleves purfiled[7] at the hond
With grys,[8] and that the fyneste of a lond;
And, for to festne his hood under his chin,
He hadde of gold y-wroght a curious pin:
A love-knot in the gretter ende ther was.
His heed was balled, that shoon as any glas,
And eek his face, as he hadde been anoint.
He was a lord ful fat and in good point;[9]
His eyen stepe,[10] and rollinge in his heed,
That stemed[11] as a forneys[11] of a leed;
His botes souple,[12] his hors in greet estat.[13]
Now certeinly he was a fair prelat;
He was nat pale as a for-pyned[14] goost.
A fat swan loved he best of any roost.
His palfrey was as broun as is a berye.

A FRERE[15] ther was, a wantown[16] and a merye,[16]

[1] Not obedient to monastic rule. [2] Mad. [3] To work. [4] As St. Augustine bade. [5] A hard rider. Cf. *prick*, "to spur." [6] Saw. [7] Fringed. [8] A costly fur. [9] Robust. Cf. French *embonpoint*. [10] Bright. [11] Glowed like the fire in a furnace. [12] Soft; pliable. [13] In good condition. [14] Tormented; much wasted. "For" is intensive. [15] Friar. [16] Lively and pleasant.

A limitour,[1] a ful solempne[2] man.
In alle the ordres foure[3] is noon that can
So moche of daliaunce[4] and fair langage.[5]
He hadde maad ful many a mariage
Of yonge wommen, at his owne cost.
Un-to his ordre he was a noble post.
Ful wel biloved and famulier was he
With frankeleyns over-al[6] in his contree,
And eek with worthy wommen of the toun:[7]
For he had power of confessioun,
As seyde him-self, more than a curat,
For of his ordre he was licentiat.[8]
Ful swetely herde he confessioun,
And plesaunt was his absolucioun;
He was an esy man to yeve[9] penaunce
Ther as he wiste to han a good pitaunce;[10]
For unto a povre ordre for to yive
Is signe that a man is wel y-shrive.[11]
For if he yaf, he dorste[12] make avaunt,[13]
He wiste that a man was repentaunt.
For many a man so hard is of his herte,
He may nat wepe al-thogh him sore smerte.
Therfore, in stede of weping and preyeres,
Men moot yeve silver to the povre freres.
His tipet[14] was ay farsed[15] ful of knyves
And pinnes, for to yeven faire wyves.
And certeinly he hadde a mery note;
Wel coude he singe and pleyen on a rote.[16]

[1] A friar restricted to a certain district within which to beg for alms. [2] Festive; in line 364 it means pompous. [3] There were four orders of mendicant friars: the Dominicans, or Black Friars; the Franciscans, or Gray Friars; the Carmelites, or White Friars; and the Augustine Friars. [4] Gossip. [5] Flattery. [6] Everywhere. [7] The parish. [8] One licensed to give absolution, a power usually belonging to the bishop only. [9] Give. [10] A portion of food. [11] Fully confessed, and hence absolved. [12] Dared. [13] Boast. [14] Cowl, or hood (used as a pocket). [15] Stuffed. [16] A kind of harp.

Of yeddinges[1] he bar utterly the prys.
His nekke whyt was as the flour-de-lys.
Ther-to[2] he strong was as a champioun.
He knew the tavernes wel in every toun,
And everich[3] hostiler[4] and tappestere[5]
Bet[6] than a lazar[7] or a beggestere;[8]
For un-to swich a worthy man as he
Acorded nat, as by his facultee,
To have with seke lazars aqueyntaunce.
It is ~~nat~~ honest, it may nat avaunce[9]
For to delen with no swich poraille,[10]
But al with riche and sellers of vitaille.[11]
And over-al, ther as[12] profit sholde aryse,
Curteys he was, and lowly of servyse.[13]
Ther nas no man nowher so vertuous.
He was the beste beggere in his hous;
For thogh a widwe hadde noght a sho,
So plesaunt was his *In principio*,[14]
Yet wolde he have a ferthing, er he wente.
His purchas was wel bettre than his rente.[15]
And rage he coude as it were right a whelpe.[16]
In love-dayes[17] ther coude he mochel helpe.
For ther he was nat lyk a cloisterer,
With a thredbare cope,[18] as is a povre scoler,
But he was lyk a maister or a pope.
Of double worsted was his semi-cope,[19]

[1] Popular songs, from Anglo-Saxon *gydd*. [2] Besides. [3] Every. [4] Innkeeper. [5] Barmaid. [6] Better. [7] A leper. [8] A female beggar. [9] Be profitable. [10] Poor people. [11] Victuals. [12] Wherever. [13] Humble in offering his services. [14] *In principio erat Verbum*, "In the beginning was the Word." This was the speech of the limiter as he passed from house to house. It was the more effective, being in Latin, and not understood by the ignorant. [15] What he got by begging was much greater than his regular salary. [16] He was as playful as a pup; "rage" here means play. [17] Days set apart for settling disputes by arbitration. [18] Priest's cloak. [19] Cape, half cope.

That rounded as a belle out of the presse.
Somwhat he lipsed, for his wantownesse,
To make his English swete up-on his tonge;
And in his harping, whan that he had songe,
His eyen twinkled in his heed aright,
As doon the sterres in the frosty night.
This worthy limitour was cleped Huberd.

A MARCHANT was ther with a forked berd,[1]
In mottelee, and hye on hors he sat,
Up-on his heed a Flaundrish bever hat;
His botes clasped faire and fetisly.
His resons he spak ful solempnely,
Sowninge alway thencrees of his winning.
He wolde the see were kept[2] for[3] any thing
Bitwixe Middelburgh and Orewelle.
Wel coude he in eschaunge sheeldes[4] selle.
This worthy man ful wel his wit bisette;[5]
Ther wiste no wight that he was in dette,
So estatly was he of his governaunce,
With his bargaynes, and with his chevisaunce.[6]
For sothe he was a worthy man with-alle,
But sooth to seyn, I noot[7] how men him calle.

A CLERK[8] ther was of Oxenford also,
That un-to logik[9] hadde longe y-go.
As lene was his hors as is a rake,
And he nas nat right fat, I undertake;
But loked holwe, and ther-to soberly.[10]
Ful thredbar was his overest courtepy;[11]
For he had geten him yet no benefice,[12]
Ne was so worldly for to have office.

[1] The fashion with merchants and others. [2] Guarded. [3] For fear of. [4] French coins. He knew how to profit by the exchange of his crowns in different money markets. [5] Employed. [6] Agreement for borrowing money. [7] Knew not. [8] Student of theology. [9] Learning. [10] Sad. [11] Short over-cloak. [12] Appointment to a church living.

For him was levere have at his beddes heed
Twenty bokes, clad in blak or reed
Of Aristotle[1] and his philosophye,
Than robes riche, or fithele, or gay sautrye.[2]
But al be that he was a philosophre,
Yet hadde he but litel gold in cofre;
But al that he mighte of his frendes hente,[3]
On bokes and on lerninge he it spente,
And bisily gan for the soules preye
Of hem that yaf him wher-with to scoleye.[4]
Of studie took he most cure and most hede.
Noght o word spak he more than was nede,
And that was seyd in forme and reverence,
And short and quik, and ful of hy sentence.
Sowninge in moral vertu was his speche,
And gladly wolde he lerne, and gladly teche.

A Sergeant of the Lawe, war and wys,[5]
That often hadde been at the parvys,[6]
Ther was also, ful riche of excellence.
Discreet he was, and of greet reverence:
He semed swich, his wordes weren so wyse,
Iustice he was ful often in assyse,[7]
By patente, and by pleyn commissioun;
For his science, and for his heigh renoun
Of fees and robes[8] hadde he many oon.
So greet a purchasour[9] was nowher noon.
Al was fee simple to him in effect,[10]
His purchasing mighte nat been infect.[11]

[1] A Greek philosopher of the fourth century B.C. [2] Psaltery, a kind of harp. [3] Take, or borrow (see also line 698). [4] Attend school. It was a common thing for poor scholars at the universities to solicit money to pay their expenses. They repaid it with prayers for their beneficiaries. [5] Wary and wise. [6] The portico of St. Paul's, London, where lawyers met for consultation. [7] Session. [8] He appeared in many cases at law. [9] Prosecutor. [10] The meaning of this line is not clear. "Fee simple" is absolute ownership. [11] His prosecutions did not have the taint of illegality.

Nowher so bisy a man as he ther nas,[1]
And yet he semed bisier than he was.
In termes hadde he caas and domes alle,
That from the tyme of king William were falle.[2]
Therto he coude endyte, and make a thing,[3]
Ther coude no wight pinche[4] at his wryting;
And every statut coude he pleyn by rote.[5]
He rood but hoomly in a medlee[6] cote
Girt with a ceint[7] of silk, with barres smale;
Of his array telle I no lenger tale.

A Frankeleyn was in his compaignye;
Whyt was his berd, as is the dayesye.
Of his complexioun he was sangwyn.
Wel loved he by the morwe a sop in wyn.[8]
To liven in delyt[9] was evere his wone,[10]
For he was Epicurus[11] owne sone,
That heeld opinioun that pleyn delyt
Was verraily felicitee parfyt.[12]
An housholdere, and that a greet, was he;
Seynt Iulian[13] he was in his contree.
His breed, his ale, was alwey after oon;[14]
A bettre envyned[15] man was nevere noon.
With-oute bake mete was nevere his hous,
Of fish and flesh, and that so plentevous,
It snewed[16] in his hous of mete and drinke,
Of alle deyntees that men coude thinke.
After the sondry sesons of the yeer,
So chaunged he his mete and his soper.

[1] Was not. Note the humor in lines 321, 322. [2] Lines 323, 324 mean that he knew in their very words (termes) all the legal cases (caas) and all decisions (domes) since the time of William the Conqueror. [3] Could prepare his papers in a case. [4] Find a flaw or fault. [5] "Coude," etc., knew fully by heart. [6] Of mixed colors. [7] A girdle. [8] Bread dipped in wine. [9] Pleasure. [10] Wont; custom. [11] A Greek philosopher. [12] Highest good; perfect happiness. [13] The patron saint of hospitality. [14] Always of the same sort. [15] Stored with wine. [16] Abounded.

Ful many a fat partrich hadde he in mewe,[1]
And many a breem[2] and many a luce[2] in stewe.[3]
Wo was his cook, but-if[4] his sauce[5] were
Poynaunt[5] and sharp, and redy al his gere.[6]
His table dormant[7] in his halle alway
Stood redy covered al the longe day.
At sessiouns[8] ther was he lord and sire.
Ful ofte tyme he was knight of the shire.
An anlas[9] and a gipser[10] al of silk
Heng at his girdel, whyt as morne milk.
A shirreve[11] hadde he been, and a countour;[12]
Was nowher such a worthy vavasour.[13]
An Haberdassher[14] and a Carpenter,
A Webbe,[15] a Dyere, and a Tapicer,[16]
And they were clothed alle in o liveree,[17]
Of a solempne and greet fraternitee.[18]
Ful fresh and newe hir gere apyked[19] was;
Hir knyves were y-chaped[20] noght with bras,
But al with silver wroght ful clene and weel,
Hir girdles and hir pouches everydeel.[21]
Wel semed ech of hem a fair burgeys,
To sitten in a yeldhalle on a deys.[22]
Everich, for the wisdom that he can,[23]
Was shaply[24] for to been an alderman.

[1] Coop. [2] The name of a fish. [3] Fish pond. [4] Unless. [5] The modern phrase is "sauce piquant." [6] Tableware. [7] "Tables with a board attached to a frame were introduced about the time of Chaucer, and, from remaining in ('dormant') the hall, are regarded as indications of a ready hospitality." [8] Sittings of court. [9] A small dagger. [10] A pouch, or purse. [11] A *reve* of a *shire;* modern "sheriff." [12] An accountant. [13] A landholder of the middle class. [14] A dealer in notions,—pins, needles, etc. [15] A male weaver. The female weaver was a *webstere*. [16] A worker in tapestry. [17] Livery; a distinguishing dress. [18] A reference to the guilds of the Middle Ages. [19] Trimmed. [20] Having *chapes*, or caps of metal at the end of the sheath or scabbard. [21] Every part. [22] A raised platform. [23] Knows. [24] Fit.

For catel[1] hadde they ynogh and rente,
And eek hir wyves wolde it wel assente;
And elles certein were they to blame.
It is ful fair to been y-clept *ma dame*,
And goon to vigilyës[2] al bifore,
And have a mantel roialliche[3] y-bore.
A Cook they hadde with hem for the nones,[4]
To boille chiknes with the mary-bones,
And poudre-marchant[5] tart, and galingale.[6]
Wel coude he knowe a draughte of London ale.[7]
He coude roste, and sethe, and broille, and frye,
Maken mortreux,[8] and wel bake a pye.
But greet harm was it, as it thoughte me,
That on his shine a mormal hadde he;[9]
For blankmanger,[10] that made he with the beste.
A Shipman was ther, woning[11] fer by weste:
For aught I woot, he was of Dertemouthe.[12]
He rood up-on a rouncy,[13] as he couthe,[14]
In a gowne of falding[15] to the knee.
A daggere hanging on a laas[16] hadde he
Aboute his nekke under his arm adoun.
The hote somer had maad his hewe al broun;
And, certeinly, he was a good felawe.
Ful many a draughte of wyn had he y-drawe[17]
From Burdeux-ward, whyl that the chapman[18] sleep.[19]
Of nyce conscience took he no keep.[20]

[1] Property; income. [2] Evening festivals commonly held in the churchyard. [3] Those of the better class had their mantles carried by servants. [4] For then once, i.e., for the occasion. [5] A flavoring powder. [6] An aromatic plant. [7] London ale was the most famous. [8] A rich soup, or broth, made from flesh of animals or the roe of fish. [9] That he had an ulcer on his shin. [10] A dish made from the white meat of chickens. [11] Dwelling. [12] A town in the southwestern part of England. [13] A common hack horse. [14] As well as he knew how. [15] Coarse cloth. [16] A belt, or strap. [17] Stolen; carried off, cask and all, probably. [18] Merchant. [19] Slept. [20] The line suggests that he had no nice scruples of conscience; cf. line 526.

If that he faught, and hadde the hyer hond,
By water he sente hem hoom to every lond.[1]
But of his craft[2] to rekene wel his tydes,
His stremes and his daungers him bisydes,
His herberwe[3] and his mone, his lodemenage,[4]
Ther nas noon swich from Hulle to Cartage.
Hardy he was, and wys to undertake;
With many a tempest hadde his berd been shake.
He knew wel alle the havenes, as they were,
From Gootlond to the cape of Finistere,
And every cryke in Britayne and in Spayne;
His barge y-cleped was the Maudelayne.

With us ther was a DOCTOUR OF PHISIK,
In al this world ne was ther noon him lyk
To speke of phisik and of surgerye;
For he was grounded in astronomye.[5]
He kepte[6] his pacient a ful greet del
In houres,[7] by his magik naturel.
Wel coude he fortunen the ascendent[8]
Of his images for his pacient.
He knew the cause of everich maladye,
Were it of hoot[9] or cold,[9] or moiste[9] or drye,[9]
And where engendred, and of what humour;
He was a verrey parfit practisour.
The cause y-knowe, and of his harm the rote,
Anon he yaf the seke man his bote.[10]

[1] He was a pirate, and sent his captives home by water to wherever they came from, i.e., threw them overboard, to swim or sink. [2] Skill. [3] Harbor. [4] Pilotage. [5] Astrology. [6] Watched. [7] Astrological hours; the time when a favorable star was in the ascendant. [8] The point of the zodiacal circle that is ascending above the horizon at a given moment. Upon it depended the drawing out of a man's horoscope, which represented the aspect of the heavens at some given critical moment. The moment here is that for making images. It was believed that images of men, made of certain substances, at certain times, could be so treated as to cause good or evil to a patient, by means of magical and planetary influences. [9] The four humors of the body. [10] Remedy.

Ful redy hadde he his apothecaries,
To sende him drogges,[1] and his letuaries,[1]
For ech of hem made other for to winne;
Hir frendschipe nas nat newe to biginne.
Wel knew he the olde Esculapius,[2]
And Deiscorides, and eek Rufus;
Old Ypocras, Haly, and Galien;
Serapion, Razis, and Avicen;
Averrois, Damascien, and Constantyn;
Bernard, and Gatesden, and Gilbertyn.
Of his diete mesurable was he,
For it was of no superfluitee,
But of greet norissing and digestible.
His studie was but litel on the Bible.
In sangwin[3] and in pers[4] he clad was al,
Lyned with taffata[5] and with sendal;[5]
And yet he was but esy of dispence;[6]
He kepte that he wan in pestilence.
For gold in phisik is a cordial,
Therfor he lovede gold in special.
A good Wyf was ther of bisyde[7] Bathe,
But she was som-del[8] deef, and that was scathe.[9]
Of cloth-making she hadde swiche an haunt,[10]
She passed hem of Ypres[11] and of Gaunt.[11]
In al the parisshe wyf ne was ther noon
That to the offring[12] bifore hir sholde goon;

[1] Drugs and remedies. [2] Esculapius (Æsculapius) was the Greek god of medicine. Ypocras (Hippocrates) was a famous Greek physician of the fourth century B.C., called the "father of medicine." Deiscorides (Dioscorides), Rufus, and Galien (Galen) were noted Greek physicians of the second century B.C. The other names mentioned in lines 429–434 refer to physicians or authorities on medicine belonging to the Middle Ages. [3] Blood-red color. [4] Bluish gray. [5] Silk. [6] Moderate in expenditure. [7] From. [8] Somewhat. [9] Unfortunate. [10] Skill. [11] Great clothing markets on the Continent. "Gaunt," modern Ghent. [12] On Relic Sunday the congregation went up to the altar to kiss the relics and contribute to the "offertory."

And if ther dide, certeyn, so wrooth was she,
That she was out of alle charitee.
Hir coverchiefs[1] ful fyne were of ground;[2]
I dorste swere they weyeden ten pound
That on a Sonday were upon hir heed.
Hir hosen weren of fyn scarlet reed,
Ful streite y-teyd, and shoos ful moiste and newe.
Bold was hir face, and fair, and reed of hewe.
She was a worthy womman al hir lyve,
Housbondes at chirche-dore[3] she hadde fyve,
Withouten[4] other compaignye in youthe;
But therof nedeth nat to speke as nouthe.[5]
And thryes hadde she been at Ierusalem;
She hadde passed many a straunge streem;
At Rome she hadde been, and at Boloigne,[6]
In Galice[7] at seint Iame, and at Coloigne.[8]
She coude[9] moche of wandring by the weye.
Gat-tothed[10] was she, soothly for to seye.
Up-on an amblere[11] esily she sat,
Y-wimpled[12] wel, and on hir heed an hat
As brood as is a bokeler or a targe;
A foot-mantel aboute hir hipes large,
And on hir feet a paire of spores[13] sharpe.
In felaweschip wel coude she laughe and carpe.[14]
Of remedies of love[15] she knew per-chaunce,
For she coude of that art the olde daunce.[16]

[1] French *couvre-chef;* modern "kerchief;" a covering for the head. [2] Of fine texture. [3] Marriages took place at the church door, after which the couple went to the altar to hear mass and partake of communion. [4] Besides. [5] Now. [6] An image of the Virgin was there. [7] Galicia. The body of St. James was said to have been carried to and preserved at Compostella in Galicia. [8] The bones of the three wise men of the East are said to be laid here. [9] Knew. [10] The word has been variously explained to mean gap-toothed, cat-toothed, goat-toothed. [11] An ambling nag. [12] See Note 2, p. 29. [13] It would seem that women rode astride. [14] Jest. [15] Love philters. [16] The old game, or custom.

A good man was ther of religioun,
And was a povre PERSOUN[1] of a toun;[1]
But riche he was of holy thoght and werk.
He was also a lerned man, a clerk,
That Cristes gospel trewely wolde preche;
His parisshens devoutly wolde he teche.
Benigne he was, and wonder diligent,
And in adversitee ful pacient;
And swich he was y-preved ofte sythes.[2]
Ful looth[3] were him to cursen[4] for his tythes,
But rather wolde he yeven, out of doute,
Un-to his povre parisshens aboute
Of his offring,[5] and eek of his substaunce.[6]
He coude in litel thing han suffisaunce.
Wyd was his parisshe, and houses fer a-sonder,
But he ne lafte nat,[7] for reyn ne thonder,
In siknes nor in meschief to visyte
The ferreste in his parisshe, moche[8] and lyte,[8]
Up-on his feet, and in his hand a staf.
This noble ensample to his sheep he yaf,
That first he wroghte, and afterward he taughte;
Out of the gospel he tho wordes caughte;
And this figure he added eek ther-to,
That if gold ruste, what shal yren do?
For if a preest be foul, on whom we truste,
No wonder is a lewed[9] man to ruste;
And shame it is, if a preest take keep,[10]
A [spotted] shepherde and a clene sheep.
Wel oghte a preest ensample for to yive,
By his clennesse, how that his sheep shold live.
He sette nat his benefice to hyre,[11]
And leet his sheep encombred in the myre,

[1] Parson, or priest, of a parish. [2] Times. [3] Unwilling. [4] Excommunicate. [5] Contributions of his parishioners. [6] Income. [7] Ceased not. [8] Great and small. [9] Ignorant. [10] Take care. [11] In charge of a curate.

And ran to London, un-to sëynt Poules,
To seken him a chaunterie[1] for soules,
Or with a bretherhed to been withholde;[2]
But dwelte at hoom, and kepte wel his folde,
So that the wolf ne made it nat miscarie;
He was a shepherde and no mercenarie.
And though he holy were, and vertuous,
He was to sinful man nat despitous,[3]
Ne of his speche daungerous[4] ne digne,[5]
But in his teching discreet and benigne.
To drawen folk to heven by fairnesse
By good ensample, this was his bisynesse:
But it were any persone obstinat,
What so he were, of heigh or lowe estat,
Him wolde he snibben[6] sharply for the nones.[7]
A bettre preest, I trowe that nowher non is.
He wayted after no pompe and reverence,
Ne maked him a spyced conscience,[8]
But Cristes lore, and his apostles twelve,
He taughte, but first he folwed it him-selve.

With him ther was a PLOWMAN, was his brother,
That hadde y-lad[9] of dong ful many a fother,[10]
A trewe swinkere[11] and a good was he,
Livinge in pees and parfit charitee.
God loved he best with al his hole herte
At alle tymes, thogh him gamed or smerte,[12]
And thanne his neighebour right as him-selve.[13]
He wolde thresshe, and ther-to dyke and delve,

[1] An endowment for the singing of masses for the repose of souls. [2] To dwell in a monastery. [3] Spiteful; cruel. [4] Not affable. [5] Pompous. [6] Reprove sharply. [7] See Note 4, p. 37. [8] The meaning of the line is probably, "He did not flavor his sermons with fine phrases to please his hearers." Cf. also line 398, and the description of the village preacher in Goldsmith's Deserted Village. [9] Drawn or hauled. [10] Load. [11] Laborer. [12] Gained or lost; pleasant or unpleasant. [13] What is the allusion in lines 533–535?

For Cristes sake, for every povre wight,
Withouten hyre, if it lay in his might.
His tythes payed he ful faire and wel,
Bothe of his propre swink and his catel.[1]
In a tabard he rood upon a mere.[2]
Ther was also a Reve and a Millere,
A Somnour and a Pardoner also,
A Maunciple, and my-self; ther were namo.
The MILLER was a stout carl,[3] for the nones,
Ful big he was of braun, and eek of bones;
That proved wel, for over-al[4] ther he cam,
At wrastling he wolde have alwey the ram.[5]
He was short-sholdred, brood, a thikke knarre,[6]
Ther nas no dore that he nolde heve of harre,[7]
Or breke it, at a renning, with his heed.
His berd as any sowe or fox was reed,
And ther-to brood, as though it were a spade.
Up-on the cop[8] right of his nose he hade
A werte, and ther-on stood a tuft of heres,
Reed as the bristles of a sowes eres;
His nose-thirles[9] blake were and wyde.
A swerd and bokeler bar he by his syde;
His mouth as greet was as a greet forneys.
He was a Ianglere[10] and a goliardeys,[11]
And that was most of sinne and harlotryes.
Wel coude he stelen corn, and tollen thryes;[12]
And yet he hadde a thombe of gold,[13] pardee.[14]
A whyt cote and a blew hood wered he.

[1] See Note 1, p. 37. [2] People of quality would not ride upon a mare. [3] Churl. [4] Wherever. [5] The usual prize in a wrestling match. [6] A thickly knotted, muscular fellow. [7] Hinges. [8] Head, or end. [9] Nose holes, i.e., nostrils, from Anglo-Saxon *thirlian*, "to pierce;" "thrill" and "drill" are from the same verb. [10] Babbler. [11] Buffoon. [12] He took toll three times. [13] Allusion to an old proverb: "Every honest miller has a thumb of gold." But no miller has a thumb of gold; therefore there is no honest miller. There are other explanations of the line. [14] *Pardieu*, a petty oath.

A baggepype wel coude he blowe and sowne,[1]
And therwithal he broghte us out of towne.
A gentil MAUNCIPLE[2] was ther of a temple,
Of which achatours[3] mighte take exemple
For to be wyse in bying of vitaille.
For whether that he payde, or took by taille,[4]
Algate[5] he wayted so in his achat,
That he was ay biforn[6] and in good stat.[7]
Now is nat that of God a ful fair grace,
That swich a lewed mannes wit shal pace[8]
The wisdom of an heep of lerned men?
Of maistres hadde he mo than thryes ten,
That were of lawe expert and curious;
Of which ther were a doseyn in that hous,
Worthy to been stiwardes of rente[9] and lond
Of any lord that is in Engelond,
To make him live by his propre good,[10]
In honour dettelees, but he were wood,
Or live as scarsly as him list desire;
And able for to helpen al a shire
In any cas that mighte falle or happe;
And yit this maunciple sette hir aller cappe.[11]
The REVE[12] was a sclendre colerik[13] man,
His berd was shave as ny as ever he can.
His heer was by his eres round y-shorn.
His top was dokked lyk a preest biforn.
Ful longe were his legges, and ful lene,
Y-lyk a staf, ther was no calf y-sene.
Wel coude he kepe a gerner[14] and a binne;
Ther was noon auditour[15] coude on him winne.

[1] Play upon. [2] Steward of a college or inn of court. [3] Purchasers, from French *acheter*, "to buy;" English "cater." [4] Took on credit. [5] Always. [6] Always before others. [7] Estate. [8] Outstrip; surpass. [9] Income. [10] His own property. [11] Set all their caps, i.e., made fools of them. [12] Steward of a manor. [13] Melancholy. [14] Granary. [15] Accountant.

Wel wiste he, by the droghte, and by the reyn,
The yeldyng of his seed, and of his greyn.
His lordes sheep, his neet,[1] his dayerye,
His swyn, his hors, his stoor,[2] and his pultrye,
Was hoolly in this reves governing,
And by his covenaunt yaf the rekening,
Sin that his lord was twenty yeer of age;
Ther coude no man bringe him in arrerage.
Ther nas baillif, ne herde,[3] ne other hyne,[4]
That he ne knew his sleighte and his covyne;[5]
They were adrad of him, as of the deeth.[6]
His woning was ful fair up-on an heeth,
With grene treës shadwed was his place.
He coude bettre than his lord purchace.
Ful riche he was astored prively,
His lord wel coude he plesen subtilly,
To yeve and lene him of his owne good,
And have a thank, and yet a cote, and hood.
In youthe he lerned hadde a good mister;[7]
He was a wel good wrighte,[8] a carpenter.
This reve sat up-on a ful good stot,[9]
That was al pomely[10] grey, and highte Scot.
A long surcote of pers up-on he hade,
And by his syde he bar a rusty blade.
Of Northfolk was this reve, of which I telle,
Bisyde a toun men clepen Baldeswelle.
Tukked he was, as is a frere, aboute,
And evere he rood the hindreste of our route.
A Somnour[11] was ther with us in that place,
That hadde a fyr-reed cherubinnes[12] face,
For sawceflem[13] he was, with eyen narwe.
[And quik] he was, and [chirped] as a sparwe,[14]

[1] Cattle. [2] Stock (of a farm). [3] Herdsman. [4] Farm servant. [5] Deceitfulness. [6] Pestilence. [7] Trade. [8] Workman. [9] A stallion. [10] Dappled. [11] A summoner. [12] Chubby. [13] Pimpled. [14] Sparrow.

With scalled[1] browes blake, and piled[2] berd;
Of his visage children were aferd.
Ther nas quik-silver, litarge,[3] ne brimstoon,
Boras, ceruce,[4] ne oille of tartre noon,
Ne oynement that wolde clense and byte,
That him mighte helpen of his whelkes[5] whyte,
Ne of the knobbes sittinge on his chekes.
Wel loved he garleek, oynons, and eek lekes,
And for to drinken strong wyn, reed as blood.
Thanne wolde he speke, and crye as he were wood.
And whan that he wel dronken hadde the wyn,
Than wolde he speke no word but Latyn.
A fewe termes hadde he, two or thre,
That he had lerned out of som decree;
No wonder is, he herde it al the day;[6]
And eek ye knowen wel, how that a Iay
Can clepen "Watte,"[7] as well as can the pope.
But who-so coude in other thing him grope,[8]
Thanne hadde he spent al his philosophye;[9]
Ay "*Questio quid iuris*"[10] wolde he crye.
He was a gentil harlot[11] and a kynde;
A bettre felawe sholde men noght fynde.
He wolde suffre for a quart of wyn
A good felawe to have his [wikked sin]
A twelf-month, and excuse him atte fulle:
And privelý a finch eek coude he pulle.[12]
And if he fond owher[13] a good felawe,
He wolde techen him to have non awe,
In swich cas, of the erchedeknes curs,[14]
But-if a mannes soule were in his purs;

[1] Scaly. [2] In patches. [3] An ointment. [4] White lead. [5] Festering pimples. [6] Note the satire in the line. [7] Can call "Watter," as a parrot says "Poll." [8] Test; examine. [9] Learning. [10] "What is the law in this case?" [11] A person of low birth and manners. [12] Cheat a greenhorn. [13] Anywhere. [14] Excommunication.

For in his purs he sholde y-punisshed be.
"Purs is the erchedeknes helle," seyde he.[1]
But wel I woot he lyed right in dede;
Of cursing oghte ech gulty man him drede—
For curs wol slee right as assoilling[2] saveth—
And also war[3] him of a *significavit*.[4]
In daunger hadde he at his owne gyse[5]
The yonge girles[6] of the diocyse,
And knew hir counseil, and was al hir reed.[7]
A gerland hadde he set up-on his heed,
As greet as it were for an ale-stake;[8]
A bokeler hadde he maad him of a cake.
With him ther rood a gentil PARDONER[9]
Of Rouncivale,[10] his frend and his compeer,
That streight was comen fro the court of Rome.
Ful loude he song, "Com hider, love, to me."
This somnour bar to him a stif burdoun,[11]
Was nevere trompe of half so greet a soun.
This pardoner hadde heer as yelow as wex,
But smothe it heng, as doth a strike of flex;[12]
By ounces[13] henge his lokkes that he hadde,
And ther-with he his shuldres overspradde;
But thinne it lay, by colpons[14] oon and oon;
But hood, for Iolitee, ne wered he noon,
For it was trussed up in his walet.
Him thoughte, he rood al of the newe Iet;[15]
Dischevele, save his cappe, he rood al bare.
Swiche glaringe eyen hadde he as an hare.

[1] Note the satire in lines 656–658. [2] Freeing from the stain (soil) of sin. [3] Warn. [4] Writ of excommunication. [5] Within reach or control of his office. [6] Young persons of either sex. [7] Adviser. [8] Signpost of an inn. [9] Seller of indulgences. [10] "There was a hospital Beatæ Mariæ de Rouncyvalle in Charing, London, and a Runceval Hall at Oxford, so that it was perhaps the name of some fraternity" (TYRWHITT). [11] Sang the bass. [12] A skein of flax. [13] Small portions. [14] Shreds, or strands. [15] Fashion.

A vernicle[1] hadde he sowed on his cappe.
His walet lay biforn him in his lappe,
Bret-ful of pardoun[2] come from Rome al hoot.[3]
A voys he hadde as smal as hath a goot.
No berd hadde he, ne nevere sholde have,
As smothe it was as it were late y-shave;

. . . . . .

But of his craft, fro Berwik into Ware,
Ne was ther swich another pardoner.
For in his male[4] he hadde a pilwe-beer,[5]
Which that, he seyde, was our lady veyl:[6]
He seyde, he hadde a gobet[7] of the seyl[8]
That sëynt Peter hadde, whan that he wente
Up-on the see, til Iesu Crist him hente.[9]
He hadde a croys of latoun,[10] ful of stones,
And in a glas he hadde pigges bones.[11]
But with thise relikes, whan that he fond
A povre person[12] dwelling up-on lond,
Up-on a day he gat him more moneye
Than that the person gat in monthes tweye.
And thus with feyned flaterye and Iapes,[13]
He made the person and the peple his apes.
But trewely to tellen, atte laste,
He was in chirche a noble ecclesiaste.
Wel coude he rede a lessoun or a storie,
But alderbest he song an offertorie;
For wel he wiste, whan that song was songe,
He moste preche, and wel affyle[14] his tonge,

[1] Diminutive of "Veronike," or "Veronica," a picture of Christ miraculously imprinted upon a handkerchief preserved in the Church of St. Peter at Rome. (Read the legend of St. Veronica.) [2] Brimful of indulgences. [3] Come from Rome so new that the wax on the seal was still hot. [4] Bag; valise. [5] Pillowcase. [6] Veil of the Virgin. [7] Small piece. [8] Sail. [9] Took; seized. [10] A yellow, metallic alloy. [11] Representing them as bones of saints and martyrs. [12] Parson; priest. [13] Tricks. [14] Polish.

To winne silver, as he ful wel coude;
Therefore he song so meriely and loude.
Now have I told you shortly, in a clause,
Thestat, tharray, the nombre, and eek the cause
Why that assembled was this compaignye
In Southwerk, at this gentil hostelrye,
That highte the Tabard, faste[1] by the Belle.[2]
But now is tyme to yow for to telle
How that we baren us that ilke night,
Whan we were in that hostelrye alight.
And after wol I telle of our viage,
And al the remenaunt of our pilgrimage.
But first I pray yow of your curteisye,
That ye narette[3] it nat my vileinye,[4]
Thogh that I pleynly speke in this matere,
To telle yow hir wordes and hir chere;[5]
Ne thogh I speke hir wordes proprely.
For this ye knowen al-so wel as I,
Who-so shal telle a tale after a man,
He moot[6] reherce, as ny as evere he can,
Everich a word, if it be in his charge,[7]
Al[8] speke he never so rudeliche and large;
Or elles he moot telle his tale untrewe,
Or feyne thing, or fynde wordes newe.
He may nat spare, al-thogh he were his brother;
He moot as wel seye o word as another.
Crist spak him-self ful brode in holy writ,
And wel ye woot, no vileinye is it.
Eek Plato seith, who-so that can him rede,
The wordes mote be cosin to the dede.[9]
Also I prey yow to foryeve it me,
Al have I nat set folk in hir degree

[1] Near by. [2] Name of an inn. [3] "Narette," i.e., *ne arrête*, "impute not." [4] Ill breeding. [5] Manner. [6] Must. [7] Memory. [8] Although. [9] The words must be akin to such as properly belong to the thing told about.

Here in this tale, as that they sholde stonde;
My wit is short, ye may wel understonde.
Greet chere made our hoste us everichon,
And to the soper sette he us anon;
And served us with vitaille at the beste.
Strong was the wyn, and wel to drinke us leste.[1]
A semely man our hoste was with-alle
For to han been a marshal in an halle;
A large man he was with eyen stepe,
A fairer burgeys was ther noon in Chepe:[2]
Bold of his speche, and wys, and wel y-taught,
And of manhod him lakkede right naught.
Eek therto he was right a mery man,
And after soper pleyen[3] he bigan,
And spak of mirthe amonges otherè thinges,
Whan that we hadde maad our rekeninges;
And seyde thus: "Now, lordinges, trewely
Ye ben to me right welcome hertely:
For by my trouthe, if that I shal nat lye,
I ne saugh this yeer so mery a compaignye
At ones in this herberwe[4] as is now.
Fayn wolde I doon yow mirthe, wiste I how.
And of a mirthe I am right now bithoght,
To doon yow ese, and it shal coste noght.
Ye goon to Caunterbury; God yow spede,
The blisful martir quyte yow your mede.[5]
And wel I woot, as ye goon by the weye,
Ye shapen yow to talen and to pleye;[6]
For trewely, confort ne mirthe is noon
To ryde by the weye doumb as a stoon;
And therfore wol I maken yow disport,
As I seyde erst, and doon yow som confort.

[1] And we were well pleased to drink. [2] Cheapside, a thoroughfare in London. [3] To make sport. [4] Inn. [5] May the blessed martyr reward you as you deserve. [6] You are preparing to tell tales and to be merry.

And if yow lyketh alle, by oon assent,
Now for to stonden at my Iugement,
And for to werken as I shal yow seye,
To-morwe, whan ye ryden by the weye,
Now, by my fader soule, that is deed,
But ye be merye, I wol yeve yow myn heed.
Hold up your hond, withoute more speche."
Our counseil was nat longe for to seche;[1]
Us thoughte it was noght worth to make it wys,[2]
And graunted him with-outen more avys,[3]
And bad him seye his verdit,[4] as him leste.[5]
"Lordinges," quod he, "now herkneth for the beste;
But tak it not, I prey yow, in desdeyn;
This is the poynt, to speken short and pleyn,
That ech of yow, to shorte with our weye,[6]
In this viage, shal telle tales tweye,
To Caunterbury-ward, I mene it so,
And hom-ward he shal tellen othere two,
Of aventures that whylom han bifalle.
And which of yow that bereth[7] him best of alle,
That is to seyn, that telleth in this cas
Tales of best sentence[8] and most solas,[9]
Shal han a soper at our aller[10] cost
Here in this place, sitting by this post,
Whan that we come agayn fro Caunterbury.
And for to make yow the more mery,
I wol my-selven gladly with yow ryde,
Right at myn owne cost, and be your gyde.
And who-so wol my Iugement withseye
Shal paye al that we spenden by the weye.

[1] Seek. [2] We did not think it worth while to make it a matter of deliberation. [3] Consideration. [4] Opinion. [5] As it pleased him. [6] To shorten the journey. [7] Conducts himself. [8] Sentiment. [9] Comfort; pleasure. [10] Shall have a supper at the cost of all.

And if ye vouche-sauf that it be so,
Tel me anon, with-outen wordes mo,
And I wol erly shape me therfore."
This thing was graunted, and our othes swore
With ful glad herte, and preyden him also
That he wold vouche-sauf for to do so,
And that he wolde been our governour,
And of our tales Iuge and reportour,
And sette a soper at a certeyn prys;
And we wold reuled been at his devys,[1]
In heigh and lowe; and thus, by oon assent,
We been acorded to his Iugement.
And ther-up-on the wyn was fet anoon;
We dronken, and to reste wente echoon,
With-outen any lenger taryinge.
A-morwe, whan that day bigan to springe,
Up roos our host, and was our aller cok,[2]
And gadrede us togidre, alle in a flok,
And forth we riden, a litel more than pas,[3]
Un-to the watering of seint Thomas.[4]
And there our host bigan his hors areste,
And seyde: "Lordinges, herkneth if yow leste.
Ye woot your forward,[5] and I it yow recorde.
If even-song and morwe-song acorde,
Lat se now who shal telle the firste tale.
As evere mote I drinke wyn or ale,
Who-so be rebel to my Iugement
Shal paye for al that by the weye is spent.
Now draweth cut, er that we ferrer twinne;[6]
He which that hath the shortest shal biginne."
"Sire knight," quod he, "my maister and my lord,
Now draweth cut, for that is myn acord.

[1] Judgment; decision. [2] Leader of us all. [3] A little faster than a walk. [4] This was a short distance on the road to Canterbury. [5] Promise. [6] Go; ride.

Cometh neer," quod he, "my lady prioresse;
And ye, sir clerk, lat be your shamfastnesse,
Ne studieth noght; ley hond to, every man."
Anon to drawen every wight bigan,
And shortly for to tellen, as it was,
Were it by aventure, or sort, or cas,
The sothe[1] is this, the cut fil to the knight,
Of which ful blythe and glad was every wight;
And telle he moste his tale, as was resoun,
By forward[2] and by composicioun,[2]
As ye han herd; what nedeth wordes mo?
And whan this goode man saugh it was so,
As he that wys was and obedient
To kepe his forward by his free assent,
He seyde: "Sin I shal biginne the game,
What, welcome be the cut, a Goddes name!
Now lat us ryde, and herkneth what I seye."
And with that word we riden forth our weye;
And he bigan with right a mery chere
His tale anon, and seyde in this manere.

Heere endith the prolog of this book; and heere bigynneth the first tale which is the Knighte[s] Tale.

[1] Truth. [2] Agreement.

THE KNIGHTES TALE.

Iamque domos patrias, Scythicae post aspera gentis
Proelia laurigero, &c.[1]

[Statius, *Theb.* xii. 519.]

Whylom,[2] as olde stories tellen us,
Ther was a duk that highte[3] Theseus;[4]
Of Athenes he was lord and governour,[5]
And in his tyme swich a conquerour,
That gretter was ther noon under the sonne.
Ful many a riche contree hadde he wonne;
That with his wisdom and his chivalrye
He conquered al the regne of Femenye,[6]
That whylom was y-cleped Scithia;[7]
And weddede the queen Ipolita,
And broghte hir hoom with him in his contree
With muchel glorie and greet solempnitee,
And eek hir yonge suster Emelye.
And thus with victorie and with melodye

[1] "And now the joyous sound of applause heralds the coming of Theseus in his laurel-crowned chariot to his paternal home, after the fierce battles with the Scythian people." [2] Once. [3] Was named. [4] Theseus, in Greek legend a hero who became king of Athens, was famed for many valorous deeds. He subdued the Amazons, a race of warlike women, and led their queen, Hippolyta, to Athens as his bride. Scythia, the home of the Amazons, was a cold region of indefinite extent north of the Black Sea. [5] Accented on last syllable, as is usual with Norman-French words. So also "conquerour," "chivalrye," etc. [6] The kingdom of the Amazons. [7] Scythia.

Lete I this noble duk to Athenes ryde,
And al his hoost, in armes him bisyde.
And certes, if it nere[1] to long to here,
I wolde han told yow fully the manere,
How wonnen was the regne of Femenye
By Theseus, and by his chivalrye;
And of the grete bataille for the nones
Bitwixen Athenes and the Amazones;
And how asseged was Ipolita,
The faire hardy queen of Scithia;
And of the feste that was at hir weddinge,
And of the tempest at hir hoom-cominge;
But al that thing I moot as now[2] forbere.
I have, God woot, a large feeld to ere,[3]
And wayke[4] been the oxen in my plough,
The remenant of the tale is long ynough;
I wol nat letten eek noon of this route,[5]
Lat every felawe telle his tale aboute,
And lat see now who shal the soper winne,
And ther I lefte, I wol ageyn biginne.[6]
This duk, of whom I make mencioun,
When he was come almost unto the toun,
In al his wele[7] and in his moste pryde,
He was war,[8] as he caste his eye asyde,
Wher that ther kneled in the hye weye
A compaignye of ladies, tweye and tweye,[9]
Ech after other, clad in clothes blake;
But swich a cry and swich a wo they make,

[1] Were not. [2] For the present. [3] To plant or sow. [4] Weak. [5] I desire not to hinder (also) none of this company. [6] Cf. Dryden's paraphrase of this line:

"And, therefore, where I left, I will pursue
This ancient story, whether false or true,
In hope it may be mended with a new."

[7] Wealth. [8] Aware. [9] Two by two.

That in this world nis creature[1] livinge,
That herde swich another weymentinge;[2]
And of this cry they nolde[3] nevere stenten,[4]
Til they the reynes of his brydel henten.[5]
"What folk been ye, that at myn hoom-cominge
Perturben[6] so my feste with cryinge?"
Quod Theseus, "have ye so greet envye
Of myn honour, that thus compleyne and crye?
Or who hath yow misboden,[7] or offended?
And telleth me if it may been amended;
And why that ye been clothed thus in blak?"
The eldest[8] lady of hem alle spak,
When she hadde swowned with a deedly chere,[9]
That it was rewthe[10] for to seen and here,
And seyde: "Lord, to whom Fortune hath yiven
Victorie, and as a conquerour to liven,
Noght greveth us your glorie and your honour;
But we biseken mercy and socour.
Have mercy on our wo and our distresse.
Som droppe of pitee, thurgh thy gentillesse,
Upon us wrecched wommen lat thou falle.
For certes, lord, ther nis noon of us alle,
That she nath[11] been a duchesse or a quene;
Now be we caitifs,[12] as it is wel sene:
Thanked be Fortune, and hir false wheel,
That noon estat assureth to be weel.[13]
And certes, lord, to abyden[14] youre presence,
Here in the temple of the goddesse Clemence
We han ben waytinge al this fourtenight;
Now help us, lord, sith[15] it is in thy might.

[1] Has here three syllables. [2] Lamentation. [3] Would not. [4] Stop. [5] Took hold of. [6] Disturb. [7] Injured. [8] Dryden has "most in years." [9] A deathlike countenance. [10] Pity. [11] Hath not. [12] Captives; prisoners. [13] That assureth no state or condition to be good. [14] Await. [15] Since, from Anglo-Saxon *sith*, "time."

I wrecche, which that wepe and wailleth thus,
Was whylom wyf to king Capaneus,[1]
That starf[2] at Thebes, cursed be that day!
And alle we, that been in this array,
And maken al this lamentacioun,
We losten alle our housbondes at that toun,
Whyl that the sege ther-aboute lay.
And yet the olde Creon, weylaway!
That lord is now of Thebes the citee,
Fulfild of ire and of iniquitee,
He, for despyt,[3] and for his tirannye,
To do the dede bodyes vileinye,[4]
Of alle our lordes, whiche that ben slawe,
Hath alle the bodyes on an heep y-drawe,
And wol nat suffren hem, by noon assent,
Neither to been y-buried nor y-brent,[5]
But maketh houndes ete hem in despyt."[6]
And with that word, with-outen more respyt,[7]
They fillen gruf,[8] and cryden pitously,
"Have on us wrecched wommen som mercy,
And lat our sorwe sinken in thyn herte."
This gentil duk doun from his courser sterte[9]
With herte pitous, whan he herde hem speke.
Him thoughte that his herte wolde breke,

[1] Polynices, with six confederates, led an unsuccessful attack against Thebes (one of the powerful cities of ancient Greece) for the throne held by his brother. Capaneus, one of the seven leaders, having boasted that even Jupiter, the king of the gods, could not hold him back, was struck dead by a thunderbolt while scaling the walls. Both Polynices and his brother having fallen in the encounter, the tyrant Creon succeeded to the throne of Thebes. [2] Died. [3] Out of spite or vexation. [4] To do outrage to the dead bodies. [5] With the Greeks burial was a solemn duty. Until the funeral rites were performed the souls of the dead were believed to wander homeless upon the earth. "Y-brent," burned. [6] "But with their lifeless limbs his hounds are fed" (DRYDEN). [7] Without more delay. [8] Fell flat with face to the ground. [9] "Then lightly from his lofty steed he flew" (DRYDEN).

Whan he saugh[1] hem so pitous and so mat,[2]
That whylom weren of so greet estat.
And in his armes he hem alle up hente,
And hem conforteth in ful good entente;
And swoor his oth, as he was trewe knight,
He wolde doon so ferforthly[3] his might
Upon the tyraunt Creon hem to wreke,
That al the peple of Grece sholde speke
How Creon was of Theseus y-served,
As he that hadde his deth ful wel deserved.
And right anoon, with-outen more abood,[4]
His baner he desplayeth, and forth rood
To Thebes-ward, and al his host bisyde;
No neer[5] Athenes wolde he go ne ryde,
Ne take his ese fully half a day,
But onward on his wey that night he lay;
And sente anoon Ipolita the quene,
And Emelye hir yonge suster shene,[6]
Un-to the toun of Athenës to dwelle;
And forth he rit; ther is namore to telle.

The rede statue of Mars with spere and targe[7]
So shyneth in his whyte baner large,
That alle the feeldes[8] gliteren up and doun;
And by his baner born is his penoun[9]

[1] Saw. [2] Dejected. [3] As far as. [4] Delay. [5] Nearer. [6] Bright.

[7] "And waved his royal banner in the wind,
Where in an argent field the god of war
Was drawn triumphant on his iron car.
Red was his sword, and shield, and whole attire,
And all the godhead seemed to glow with fire;
E'en the ground glittered where the standard flew,
And the green grass was dyed to sanguine hue.
High on his pointed lance his pennon bore
His Cretan fight, the conquer'd Minotaur" (DRYDEN).

[8] "Field" is an heraldic term to denote the ground upon which are emblazoned the armorial bearings. [9] Pennant, carried on the end of a lance.

Of gold ful riche, in which ther was y-bete
The Minotaur [1] which that he slough [2] in Crete.
Thus rit this duk, thus rit this conquerour,
And in his host of chivalrye the flour,
Til that he cam to Thebes, and alighte
Faire in a feeld, ther as he thoughte fighte.
But shortly for to speken of this thing,
With Creon, which that was of Thebes king,
He faught, and slough him manly as a knight
In pleyn bataille,[3] and putte the folk to flight;
And by assaut he wan the citee after,
And rente adoun bothe wal, and sparre,[4] and rafter;
And to the ladyes he restored agayn
The bones of hir housbondes that were slayn,
To doon obsequies, as was tho the gyse.[5]
But it were al to long for to devyse [6]
The grete clamour and the waymentinge
That the ladyes made at the brenninge
Of the bodyes, and the grete honour
That Theseus, the noble conquerour,
Doth to the ladyes, whan they from him wente;
But shortly for to telle is myn entente.
Whan that this worthy duk, this Theseus,
Hath Creon slayn, and wonne Thebes thus,
Stille in that feeld he took al night his reste,
And dide with al the contree as him leste.
To ransake in the tas [7] of bodyes dede,
Hem for to strepe of harneys [8] and of wede,[9]
The pilours [10] diden bisynesse and cure,
After the bataille and disconfiture.

[1] One of the most famous exploits of Theseus was his slaying of the Minotaur, a monster half man, half bull, lodged in a labyrinth in Crete. Minos, king of Crete, had exacted a yearly tribute from the Athenians of seven youths and seven maidens, who fell victims to the Minotaur. [2] Slew. [3] In a fair, open fight. [4] Bolts. [5] As was then the custom. [6] Relate; describe. [7] Heap. [8] Arms. [9] Clothing. [10] Plunderers.

And so bifel, that in the tas thei founde,
Thurgh-girt [1] with many a grevous blody wounde,
Two yonge knightes ligging by and by,[2]
Bothe in oon armes,[3] wroght ful richely;
Of whiche two, Arcita hight that oon,
And that other knight hight Palamon.
Nat fully quike,[4] ne fully dede they were,
But by hir cote-armures,[5] and by hir gere,[6]
The heraudes knewe hem best in special,
As they that weren of the blood roial [7]
Of Thebes, and of sustren two y-born.
Out of the tas the pilours han hem torn,
And han hem caried softe un-to the tente
Of Theseus, and he ful sone hem sente
To Athenës, to dwellen in prisoun
Perpetuelly, he nolde no raunsoun.[8]
And whan this worthy duk hath thus y-don,
He took his host, and hoom he rood anon
With laurer crowned as a conquerour;
And there he liveth in Ioye and in honour
Terme [9] of his lyf; what nedeth wordes mo?
And in a tour, in angwish and in wo,
This Palamon, and his felawe Arcite,
For everemore, ther may no gold hem quyte.[10]
This passeth yeer by yeer, and day by day,
Til it fil ones, in a morwe [11] of May,
That Emelye, that fairer was to sene
Than is the lilie vpon his stalke grene,
And fressher than the May with floures newe—
For with the rose colour strof hir hewe,[12]

[1] Pierced through. [2] Lying apart. [3] Armor of the same kind, showing that they belonged to the same house. [4] Alive. [5] Devices on the breast-plate. [6] Equipments. [7] Royal. [8] Would not accept any ransom. [9] Remainder. [10] Release. [11] Morning. [12] Her complexion strove with the rose in beauty of color.

I noot[1] which was the fairer of hem two—
Er it were day, as was hir wone[2] to do,
She was arisen, and al redy dight;[3]
For May wol have no slogardye anight.
The sesoun priketh every gentil herte,
And maketh him out of his sleep to sterte,
And seith, "Arys, and do thyn observaunce."
This maked Emelye have remembraunce
To doon honour to May, and for to ryse.
Y-clothed was she fresh, for to devyse;
Hir yelow heer was broyded[4] in a tresse,
Bihynde hir bak, a yerde long, I gesse.
And in the gardin, at the sonne up-riste,[5]
She walketh up and doun, and as hir liste[6]
She gadereth floures, party[7] whyte and rede,
To make a sotil[8] gerland for hir hede,
And as an aungel hevenly she song.
The grete tour, that was so thikke and strong,
Which of the castel was the chief dongeoun,
(Ther as the knightes weren in prisoun,
Of which I tolde yow, and tellen shal)
Was evene Ioynant[9] to the gardin-wal,
Ther as this Emelye hadde hir pleyinge.[10]
Bright was the sonne, and cleer that morweninge,
And Palamon, this woful prisoner,
As was his wone, by leve of his gayler,
Was risen, and romed in a chambre on heigh,
In which he al the noble citee seigh,
And eek the gardin, ful of braunches grene,
Ther as this fresshe Emelye the shene

[1] Know not. [2] Custom. [3] Arrayed. [4] Braided. [5] At the sun's rising.

"Aurora had but newly chased the night
And purpled o'er the sky with blushing light" (DRYDEN).

[6] As she pleased. [7] Partly. [8] Finely woven. [9] Closely adjoining.
[10] Amusement.

Was in hir walk, and romed up and doun.
This sorweful prisoner, this Palamoun,
Goth in the chambre, roming to and fro,
And to him-self compleyning of his wo;
That he was born, ful ofte he seyde, "alas!"
And so bifel, by aventure or cas,[1]
That thurgh a window, thikke of many a barre
Of iren greet, and square as any sparre,[2]
He caste his eye upon Emelya,
And ther-with-al he bleynte,[3] and cryde "a!"
As though he stongen were un-to the herte.
And with that cry Arcite anon up-sterte,
And seyde, "Cosin myn, what eyleth thee,
That art so pale and deedly on to see?
Why crydestow?[4] who hath thee doon offence?
For Goddes love, tak al in pacience
Our prisoun, for it may non other be;
Fortune hath yeven us this adversitee.
Som wikke aspect or disposicioun
Of Saturne,[5] by sum constellacioun,
Hath yeven us this, al-though we hadde it sworn;
So stood the heven whan that we were born;
We moste endure it: this is the short and pleyn."[6]
This Palamon answerde, and seyde ageyn,
"Cosyn, for sothe,[7] of this opinioun[8]
Thou hast a veyn imaginacioun.
This prison caused me nat for to crye.
But I was hurt right now thurgh-out myn yë
In-to myn herte, that wol my bane be.
The fairnesse of that lady that I see
Yond in the gardin romen to and fro,
Is cause of al my crying and my wo.

[1] By chance or hap. [2] A square wooden beam. [3] Was startled. [4] Why criedst thou? [5] Saturn is the planet of evil aspect (see lines 470, 1585). [6] A brief, plain statement of the case. [7] In truth. [8] Idea; notion.

I noot wher she be womman or goddesse;
But Venus is it, sothly, as I gesse."
And ther-with-al on kneës doun he fil,
And seyde: "Venus, if it be thy wil
Yow in this gardin thus to transfigure,[1]
Bifore me sorweful wrecche creature,
Out of this prisoun help that we may scapen.
And if so be my destinee be shapen
By eterne word[2] to dyen in prisoun,
Of our linage[3] have som compassioun,
That is so lowe y-broght by tirannye."
And with that word Arcite gan espye
Wher-as this lady romed to and fro.
And with that sighte hir beautee hurte him so,
That if that Palamon was wounded sore,
Arcite is hurt as moche as he, or more.
And with a sigh he seyde pitously:
"The fresshe beautee sleeth me sodeynly
Of hir that rometh in the yonder place;
And but[4] I have hir mercy and hir grace,
That I may seen hir atte leste weye,[5]
I nam but deed;[6] ther nis no more to seye."
This Palamon, whan he tho wordes herde,
Dispitously he loked, and answerde:
"Whether seistow[7] this in ernest or in pley?"
"Nay," quod Arcite, "in ernest, by my fey![8]
God help me so, me list ful evele pleye."[9]
This Palamon gan knitte his browes tweye:
"It nere,"[10] quod he, "to thee no greet honour
For to be fals, ne for to be traytour
To me, that am thy cosin and thy brother
Y-sworn ful depe, and ech of us til other,

[1] Supply "yourself." [2] Fate. [3] Lineage. [4] Unless. [5] At the least; cf. "leastwise." [6] I am naught but dead. [7] Sayest thou. [8] By my faith. [9] It ill pleases me to jest. [10] It would not be.

That nevere, for to dyen in the peyne,[1]
Til that the deeth departe[2] shal us tweyne,
Neither of us in love to hindren other,
Ne in non other cas,[3] my leve[4] brother;
But that thou sholdest trewely forthren[5] me
In every cas, and I shal forthren thee.
This was thyn ooth, and myn also, certeyn;
I wot right wel, thou darst it nat withseyn.
Thus artow of my counseil,[6] out of doute.
And now thou woldest falsly been aboute
To love my lady, whom I love and serve,
And evere shal, til that myn herte sterve.
Now certes, fals Arcite, thou shalt nat so.
I loved hir first, and tolde thee my wo
As to my counseil,[7] and my brother sworn
To forthre[8] me, as I have told biforn.
For which thou art y-bounden as a knight
To helpen me, if it lay in thy might,
Or elles artow fals, I dar wel seyn."[9]
This Arcitë ful proudly spak ageyn,
"Thou shalt," quod he, "be rather fals than I;
But thou art fals, I telle thee utterly;
For *par amour*[10] I loved hir first er thow.
What wiltow seyn? thou wistest[11] nat yet now
Whether she be a womman or goddesse.
Thyn is affeccioun of holynesse,[12]
And myn is love, as to a creature;
For which I tolde thee myn aventure
As to my cosin, and my brother sworn.
I pose,[13] that thou lovedest hir biforn;

[1] The line means, "Never, even if it cost us death by torture." [2] Separate. [3] Usually, hap, event; here, case. [4] Beloved. [5] Assist. [6] Opinion. [7] Counselor. [8] Further (a verb). [9] I dare maintain. [10] With love; cf. *con amore*. [11] Knewest. [12] A holy or sacred affection. [13] I will suppose; granting.

Wostow[1] nat wel the olde clerkes sawe,[2]
That 'who shal yeve a lover any lawe?
Love is a gretter lawe, by my pan,[3]
Than may be yeve to any erthly man.'
And therfore positif lawe and swich decree[4]
Is broke al-day for love, in ech degree.[5]
A man moot nedes love, maugree his heed.[6]
He may nat flee[7] it, thogh he sholde be deed,
Al[8] be she mayde, or widwe, or elles wyf.
And eek it is nat lykly, al thy lyf,
To stonden in hir grace; [9] namore shal I;
For wel thou wost thy-selven, verraily,
That thou and I be dampned[10] to prisoun
Perpetuelly; us gayneth no raunsoun.
We stryve, as dide the houndes for the boon,
They foughte al day, and yet hir part was noon;
Ther cam a kyte, whyl that they were wrothe,
And bar awey the boon bitwixe hem bothe.
And therfore at the kinges court, my brother,
Ech man for him-self, ther is non other.
Love if thee list; for I love and ay shal;
And sothly, leve brother, this is al.
Here in this prisoun mote we endure,
And everich of us take his aventure."

Greet was the stryf and long bitwixe hem tweye,
If that I hadde leyser[11] for to seye;
But to theffect. It happed on a day,
(To telle it yow as shortly as I may)
A worthy duk that highte Perotheus,
That felawe was un-to duk Theseus
Sin thilke day that they were children lyte,
Was come to Athenes, his felawe to visyte,

[1] Knowest. [2] Saying. [3] Skull. [4] Ordinance. [5] In every rank in life. [6] In spite of himself. [7] Escape. [8] Whether. [9] Favor. [10] Condemned. [11] Leisure.

And for to pleye,[1] as he was wont to do,
For in this world he loved no man so:
And he loved him as tendrely ageyn.
So wel they loved, as olde bokes seyn,
That whan that oon was deed, sothly to telle,
His felawe wente and soughte him doun in helle;[2]
But of that story list me nat to wryte.
Duk Perotheus loved wel Arcite,
And hadde him knowe at Thebes yeer by yere;
And fynally, at requeste and preyere
Of Perotheus, with-oute any raunsoun,
Duk Theseus him leet out of prisoun,
Frely to goon, wher that him liste over-al,
In swich a gyse,[3] as I you tellen shal.
This was the forward, pleynly for tendite,
Bitwixen Theseus and him Arcite:
That if so were, that Arcite were y-founde
Evere in his lyf, by day or night, o stounde[4]
In any contree of this Theseus,
And he were caught, it was acorded thus,
That with a swerd he sholde lese his heed;
Ther nas noon other remedye ne reed,[5]
But taketh his leve, and homward he him spedde;
Let him be war, his nekke lyth to wedde![6]
How greet a sorwe suffreth now Arcite!
The deeth he feleth thurgh his herte smyte;
He wepeth, weyleth, cryeth pitously;
To sleen him-self he wayteth[7] prively.[8]

[1] Amuse (himself). [2] Pirithous, king of Thessaly, had helped Theseus to carry off Helen from Sparta, and in return Theseus accompanied Pirithous to Hades to assist the latter in carrying off Proserpina, the wife of Pluto, god of the lower regions; but the attempt was unsuccessful, and Pluto punished both heroes by chaining them to a rock. [3] Manner. [4] One instant of time. [5] Counsel, or plan. [6] His neck lieth in jeopardy. [7] Seeks an opportunity. [8] Secretly.

He seyde, "Allas that day that I was born![1]
Now is my prisoun worse than biforn;
Now is me shape[2] eternally to dwelle
Noght in purgatorie, but in helle.
Allas! that evere knew I Perotheus!
For elles hadde I dwelled with Theseus
Y-fetered in his prisoun evere-moo.
Than hadde I been in blisse, and nat in wo.
Only the sighte of hir, whom that I serve,
Though that I nevere hir grace may deserve,
Wolde han suffised right ynough for me.
O dere cosin Palamon," quod he,
"Thyn is the victorie of this aventure,
Ful blisfully in prison maistow[3] dure;[4]
In prison? certes nay, but in paradys![5]
Wel hath fortune y-turned thee the dys,[6]
That hast the sight of hir, and I thabsence.
For possible is, sin thou hast hir presence,
And art a knight, a worthy and an able,
That by som cas, sin fortune is chaungeable,
Thou maist to thy desyr som-tyme atteyne.
But I, that am exyled, and bareyne
Of alle grace, and in so greet despeir,
That ther nis erthe, water, fyr, ne eir,[7]
Ne creature, that of hem maked is,
That may me helpe or doon confort in this.
Wel oughte I sterve in wanhope[8] and distresse;
Farwel my lyf, my lust, and my gladnesse.
Allas, why pleynen folk so in commune
Of purveiaunce[9] of God, or of fortune,

[1] Cf. line 684, and Legend of Good Women, line 658: "'Allas!' quod he, 'the day that I was born!'" [2] Now am I fated. [3] Mayest thou. [4] Endure; remain. [5] Pronounced *parys*, "paradise." [6] Turned in thy favor the dice. [7] The four elements in line 388 were supposed to be the constituents of all things. [8] Hopelessness. [9] Providence.

That yeveth hem ful ofte in many a gyse[1]
Wel bettre than they can hem-self devyse?
Som man desyreth for to han richesse,
That cause is of his mordre or greet siknesse.
And som man wolde out of his prison fayn,[2]
That in his hous is of his meynee[3] slayn.
Infinite harmes been in this matere;[4]
We witen nat what thing we prayen here.[5]
We faren as he that dronke is as a mous;
A dronke man wot wel he hath an hous,
But he noot which the righte wey is thider;
And to a dronke man the wey is slider;[6]
And certes, in this world so faren we;
We seken faste after felicitee,
But we goon wrong ful often trewely.
Thus may we seyen alle, and namely I,
That wende and hadde a greet opinioun,
That if I mighte escapen from prisoun,
Than hadde I been in Ioye and perfit hele,[7]
Ther[8] now I am exyled fro my wele.[9]
Sin that I may nat seen yow, Emelye,
I nam but deed; ther nis no remedye."
  Up-on that other syde Palamon,
Whan that he wiste Arcite was agon,
Swich sorwe he maketh, that the grete tour
Resouneth of his youling[10] and clamour.
The pure fettres[11] on his shines[12] grete
Weren of his bittre salte teres wete.
"Allas!" quod he, "Arcita, cosin myn,
Of al our stryf, God woot, the fruyt is thyn.

[1] Shape; form. [2] Another would fain be out of his prison. [3] Attendants; servants. [4] The matter of complaining of God's providence. [5] We know not what we should pray for here. [6] Slippery. [7] Health; happiness. [8] Whereas. [9] Literally means "wealth." [10] Yelling. [11] The very fetters. [12] Legs.

Thow walkest now in Thebes at thy large,[1]
And of my wo thou yevest litel charge.[2]
Thou mayst, sin thou hast wisdom and manhede,
Assemblen alle the folk of our kinrede,
And make a werre so sharpe on this citee,
That by som aventure, or som tretee,
Thou mayst have hir to lady and to wyf,
For whom that I mot nedes lese my lyf.
For, as by wey of possibilitee,
Sith thou art at thy large, of prison free,
And art a lord, greet is thyn avauntage,
More than is myn, that sterve here in a cage.
For I mot wepe and weyle, whyl I live,
With al the wo that prison may me yive,
And eek with peyne that love me yiveth also,
That doubleth al my torment and my wo."
Ther-with the fyr of Ielousye up-sterte
With-inne his brest, and hente[3] him by the herte
So woodly,[4] that he lyk was to biholde
The box-tree,[5] or the asshen[6] dede and colde.
Tho seyde he: "O cruel goddes,[7] that governe
This world with bynding of your word eterne,
And wryten in the table of athamaunte
Your parlement,[8] and your eterne graunte,
What is mankynde more un-to yow holde[9]
Than is the sheep, that rouketh[10] in the folde?
For slayn is man right as another beste,
And dwelleth eek in prison and areste,
And hath siknesse, and greet adversitee,
And ofte tymes giltelees, pardee.
What governaunce is in this prescience,
That giltelees tormenteth innocence?

[1] At liberty. [2] Care, or thought. [3] Seized. [4] Madly. [5] Boxwood is white. [6] Ashes. [7] The goddess of fate. [8] Word. [9] Esteemed. [10] Lies close.

And yet encreseth this al my penaunce,
That man is bounden to his observaunce,
For Goddes sake, to letten[1] of his wille,
Ther as[2] a beest may al his lust fulfille.
And whan a beest is deed, he hath no peyne;
But man after his deeth moot wepe and pleyne,
Though in this world he have care and wo:
With-outen doute it may stonden so.
The answere of this I lete to divynis,
But wel I woot, that in this world gret pyne is.
Allas! I se a serpent or a theef,
That many a trewe man hath doon meschief,
Goon at his large, and wher him list may turne.
But I moot been in prison thurgh Saturne,
And eek thurgh Iuno,[3] Ialous and eek wood,
That hath destroyed wel ny al the blood
Of Thebes, with his waste[4] walles wyde.
And Venus sleeth me on that other syde
For Ielousye, and fere[5] of him Arcite."
Now wol I stinte[6] of Palamon a lyte,
And lete him in his prison stille dwelle,
And of Arcita forth I wol yow telle.
The somer passeth, and the nightes longe
Encresen double wyse the peynes stronge
Bothe of the lovere and the prisoner.
I noot which hath the wofullere mester.[7]
For shortly for to seyn, this Palamoun
Perpetuelly is dampned to prisoun,
In cheynes and in fettres to been deed;
And Arcite is exyled upon his heed[8]

[1] Refrain from. [2] Whereas. [3] Cadmus, the founder of Thebes, by slaying a dragon sacred to Mars drew upon his race the hostility of both the war god and his mother Juno. [4] Vast. Note the alliteration. [5] Fear. Fear that Arcite will succeed also kills him. [6] Stop. [7] Need. [8] Upon penalty of death.

For evere-mo as out of that contree,
Ne nevere-mo he shal his lady see.
Yow loveres axe I now this questioun,[1]
Who hath the worse, Arcite or Palamoun?
That oon may seen his lady day by day,
But in prisoun he moot dwelle alway.
That other wher him list may ryde or go,
But seen his lady shal he nevere-mo.
Now demeth as yow liste, ye that can,
For I wol telle forth as I bigan.

Explicit prima Pars. Sequitur pars secunda.

Whan that Arcite to Thebes comen was,
Ful ofte a day he swelte[2] and seyde "allas,"
For seen his lady shal he nevere-mo.
And shortly to concluden al his wo,
So muche sorwe had nevere creature
That is, or shal, whyl that the world may dure.
His sleep, his mete, his drink is him biraft,[3]
That lene he wex,[4] and drye as is a shaft.
His eyen holwe, and grisly[5] to biholde;
His hewe falwe,[6] and pale as asshen colde,[7]
And solitarie he was, and evere allone,
And wailling al the night, making his mone.[8]
And if he herde song or instrument,
Then wolde he wepe, he mighte nat be stent;
So feble eek were his spirits, and so lowe,
And chaunged so, that no man coude knowe
His speche nor his vois, though men it herde.
And in his gere,[9] for al the world he ferde[10]

[1] Such questions were submitted to mediæval courts of love. [2] Fainted. [3] Bereft. [4] Grew thinner day by day. [5] Dreadful. [6] Yellowish pale. [7] See line 444. [8] Moan; complaint. [9] Dress and manner. [10] Conducted himself.

Nat oonly lyk the loveres maladye[1]
Of Hereos,[2] but rather lyk manye[3]
Engendred of humour malencolyk,[4]
Biforen, in his celle fantastyk.[5]
And shortly, turned was al up-so-doun
Bothe habit and eek disposicioun
Of him, this woful lovere daun[6] Arcite.
What sholde I al-day of his wo endyte?
Whan he endured hadde a yeer or two
This cruel torment, and this peyne and wo,
At Thebes, in his contree, as I seyde,
Up-on a night, in sleep as he him leyde,
Him thoughte how that the winged god Mercurie[7]
Biforn him stood, and bad him to be murye.[8]
His slepy yerde[9] in hond he bar uprighte;
An hat he werede up-on his heres brighte.
Arrayed was this god (as he took keep[10])
As he was whan that Argus[7] took his sleep;
And seyde him thus: "To Athenes shaltou wende;
Ther is thee shapen[11] of thy wo an ende."
And with that word Arcite wook and sterte.
"Now trewely, how sore that me smerte,"
Quod he, "to Athenes right now wol I fare;
Ne for the drede of deeth shal I nat spare
To see my lady, that I love and serve;
In hir presence I recche[12] nat to sterve."

[1] Lovers' melancholy. [2] Eros, the Greek name of the god of love. [3] Mania. [4] Humor melancholy. Melancholia was one of the supposed "humours" of the body. [5] The "fantastic cell" of the brain was placed in the front part of the head. [6] "Daun" or "Dan," Lord, was a title prefixed to names of important persons. [7] Mercury, the messenger of the gods. By a touch of his staff, intertwined with serpents, he could sink men into slumber or waken them from sleep. Juno having set her hundred-eyed watchman, Argus, to keep guard over her rival, Io (one of Jupiter's favorites), Mercury was sent by Jupiter to kill Argus after lulling him to slumber. [8] Merry. [9] Wand, the caduceus. [10] Notice. [11] Destined. [12] Reck.

And with that word he caughte a greet mirour,
And saugh that chaunged was al his colour,
And saugh his visage al in another kynde.
And right anoon it ran him in his mynde,
That, sith his face was so disfigured
Of maladye, the which he hadde endured,
He mighte wel, if that he bar him lowe,[1]
Live in Athenes evere-more unknowe,
And seen his lady wel ny day by day.
And right anon he chaungede his array,
And cladde him as a povre laborer,
And al allone, save oonly a squyer,
That knew his privetee[2] and al his cas,
Which was disgysed povrely,[3] as he was,
To Athenes is he goon the nexte[4] way.
And to the court he wente up-on a day,
And at the gate he profreth his servyse,
To drugge[5] and drawe,[5] what so men wol devyse.
And shortly of this matere for to seyn,
He fil in office[6] with a chamberleyn,
The which that dwelling was with Emelye.
For he was wys, and coude soon aspye[7]
Of every servaunt, which that serveth here.
Wel coude he hewen wode, and water bere,
For he was yong and mighty for the nones,
And ther-to he was strong and big of bones
To doon that any wight can him devyse.
A yeer or two he was in this servyse,
Page of the chambre of Emelye the brighte;
And "Philostrate"[8] he seide that he highte.
But half so wel biloved a man as he
Ne was ther nevere in court, of his degree;

[1] Conducted himself like one of humble condition. [2] Secret or private affairs. [3] Poorly. [4] Nearest. [5] To drudge and carry. [6] Was hired by. [7] Espy. [8] The name means "prostrated by love."

He was so gentil of condicioun,
That thurghout al the court was his renoun.
They seyden that it were a charitee
That Theseus wolde enhauncen his degree,
And putten him in worshipful[1] servyse,
Ther as he mighte his vertu excercyse.
And thus, with-inne a whyle, his name is spronge
Bothe of his dedes, and his goode tonge,
That Theseus hath taken him so neer
That of his chambre he made him a squyer,
And yaf him gold to mayntene his degree;
And eek men broghte him out of his contree
From yeer to yeer ful privelyhis rente;
But honestly and slyly[2] he it spente,
That no man wondred how that he it hadde.
And thre yeer in this wyse his lyf he ladde,
And bar him so in pees and eek in werre,
Ther nas no man that Theseus hath derre.[3]
And in this blisse lete I now Arcite,
And speke I wol of Palamon a lyte.
In derknesse and horrible and strong prisoun
This seven yeer hath seten Palamoun,
Forpyned,[4] what for wo and for distresse;
Who feleth double soor and hevynesse
But Palamon? that love destreyneth so,
That wood[5] out of his wit he goth for wo;
And eek therto he is a prisoner
Perpetuelly, noght oonly for a yeer.
Who coude ryme in English proprely
His martirdom? for sothe, it am nat I;
Therefore I passe as lightly as I may.
It fel that in the seventhe yeer, in May,
The thridde night, (as olde bokes seyn,
That al this storie tellen more pleyn,)

[1] Honorable. [2] Prudently. [3] Dearer. [4] Wasted away. [5] Mad.

Were it by aventure or destinee,
(As, whan a thing is shapen, it shal be,)
That, sone after the midnight, Palamoun,
By helping of a freend, brak his prisoun,
And fleeth the citee faste as he may go,
For he had yive his gayler drinke so
Of a clarree,[1] maad of a certeyn wyn,
With nercotikes and opie[2] of Thebes fyn,
That al that night, thogh that men wolde him shake,
The gayler sleep, he mighte nat awake;
And thus he fleeth as faste as evere he may.
The night was short, and faste by the day,
That nedes-cost[3] he moste him-selven hyde,
And til a grove, faste ther besyde,
With dredful[4] foot than stalketh Palamoun.
For shortly, this was his opinioun,
That in that grove he wolde him hyde al day,
And in the night than wolde he take his way
To Thebes-ward, his frendes for to preye
On Theseus to helpe him to werreye;[5]
And shortly, outher he wolde lese his lyf,
Or winnen Emelye un-to his wyf;
This is theffect and his entente pleyn.
Now wol I torne un-to Arcite ageyn,
That litel wiste how ny that was his care,
Til that fortune had broght him in the snare.
The bisy larke, messager of daye,
Saluëth[6] in hir song the morwe graye;
And fyry Phebus ryseth up so brighte,
That al the orient laugheth of the lighte,[7]

[1] A strained or clear drink compounded of wine, honey, and spices, "so delicious as to be comparable to the nectar of the gods." [2] Opiates. [3] As he needs must. [4] Fearful. [5] Wage war. [6] Saluteth. [7] This beautiful line is copied from Dante's Purgatory, Canto I. line 20: "Faceva tutto rider l'oriente."

And with his stremes[1] dryeth in the greves[2]
The silver dropes, hanging on the leves.[3]
And Arcite, that is in the court roial[4]
With Theseus, his squyer principal,
Is risen, and loketh on the myrie day.
And, for to doon his observaunce to May,
Remembring on the poynt[5] of his desyr,
He on a courser, sterting as the fyr,
Is riden in-to the feeldes, him to pleye,
Out of the court, were it a myle or tweye;
And to the grove, of which that I yow tolde,
By aventure his wey he gan to holde,
To maken him a gerland of the greves,
Were it of wodebynde or hawethorn-leves,
And loude he song ageyn the sonne shene:
"May, with alle thy floures and thy grene,
Wel-come be thou, wel faire fresshe May,
I hope that I som grene gete may."
And from his courser, with a lusty herte,
In-to the grove ful hastily he sterte,
And in a path he rometh up and doun,
Ther as by aventure this Palamoun
Was in a bush, that no man mighte him see,
For sore afered of his deeth was he.
No-thing ne knew he that it was Arcite:
God wot he wolde have trowed it ful lyte.

[1] Beams; streams of light. [2] Groves. [3] Note Dryden's rendering of lines 633–638:

"The morning lark, the messenger of day,
Saluted in her song the morning gray;
And soon the sun arose with beams so bright
That all the horizon laughed to see the joyous sight.
He with his tepid rays the rose renews,
And licks the dropping leaves, and dries the dews."

[4] Royal. [5] In particular.

But soth is seyd, gon sithen many yeres,
That feeld hath eyen, and the wode hath eres.
It is ful fair a man to bere him evene,
For al-day meteth men at unset stevene.[1]
Ful litel wot Arcite of his felawe,
That was so ny to herknen al his sawe,
For in the bush he sitteth now ful stille.
Whan that Arcite had romed al his fille,
And songen al the roundel[2] lustily,
In-to a studie he fil al sodeynly,
As doon thise loveres in hir queynte geres,[3]
Now in the croppe,[4] now doun in the breres,
Now up, now doun, as boket in a welle.
Right as the Friday,[5] sothly for to telle,
Now it shyneth, now it reyneth faste,
Right so can gery[6] Venus overcaste
The hertes of hir folk; right as hir day
Is gerful, right so chaungeth she array.
Selde is the Friday al the wyke ylyke.
Whan that Arcite had songe, he gan to syke,[7]
And sette him doun with-outen any more:
"Alas!" quod he, "that day that I was bore!
How longe, Iuno, thurgh thy crueltee,
Woltow[8] werreyen[9] Thebes the citee?
Allas! y-broght is to confusioun
The blood roial of Cadme[10] and Amphioun;[11]
Of Cadmus, which that was the firste man
That Thebes bulte, or first the toun bigan,
And of the citee first was crouned king,
Of his linage am I, and his of-spring

[1] An unforeseen meeting. [2] Song. [3] Strange fashions. [4] Top. [5] Friday is named for the Saxon goddess Freya, who corresponds to Venus. [6] Inconstant. [7] Sigh. [8] Wilt thou. [9] War against. [10] See Note 3, p. 71. [11] Amphion, a skillful musician, the husband of Niobe. He took possession of Thebes, and slew the king, who had treated his mother unkindly.

By verray ligne, as of the stok roial:
And now I am so caitif and so thral,[1]
That he, that is my mortal enemy,
I serve him as his squyer povrely.
And yet doth Iuno me wel more shame,
For I dar noght biknowe [2] myn owne name,
But ther as I was wont to highte [3] Arcite,
Now highte I Philostrate, noght worth a myte.
Allas! thou felle [4] Mars, allas! Iuno,
Thus hath your ire our kinrede al fordo,[5]
Save only me, and wrecched Palamoun,
That Theseus martyreth in prisoun.
And over al this, to sleen me utterly,
Love hath his fyry dart so brenningly [6]
Y-stiked thurgh my trewe careful herte,
That shapen was my deeth erst than my sherte.[7]
Ye sleen me with your eyen, Emelye;
Ye been the cause wherfor that I dye.
Of al the remenant of myn other care
Ne sette I nat the mountaunce [8] of a tare,
So that I coude doon aught to your plesaunce."
And with that word he fil doun in a traunce
A long tyme; and he afterward upsterte.
This Palamoun, that thoughte that thurgh his herte
He felte a cold swerd sodeynliche glyde,
For ire he quook, no lenger wolde he byde.
And whan that he had herd Arcites tale,
As he were wood, with face deed and pale,
He sterte him up out of the buskes thikke,
And seyde: "Arcite, false traitour wikke,
Now artow hent, that lovest my lady so,
For whom that I have al this peyne and wo,

[1] A slave. [2] Acknowledge. [3] To be called. [4] Cruel. [5] Destroyed. [6] Burningly. [7] Cf. Legend of Good Women, line 2626: "Sens first that day that schapen was my sherte." [8] Value.

And art my blood, and to my counseil sworn,
As I ful ofte have told thee heer-biforn,
And hast by-iaped [1] heer duk Theseus,
And falsly chaunged hast thy name thus;
I wol be deed, or elles thou shalt dye.
Thou shalt nat love my lady Emelye,
But I wol love hir only and namo; [2]
For I am Palamoun, thy mortal fo.
And though that I no wepne have in this place,
But out of prison am astert by grace,
I drede [3] noght that outher [4] thou shalt dye,
Or thou ne shalt nat loven Emelye.
Chees which thou wilt, for thou shalt nat asterte." [5]
This Arcite, with ful despitous herte,
Whan he him knew, and hadde his tale herd,
As fiers as leoun pulled out a swerd,
And seyde thus: "by God that sit above,
Nere it that thou art sik and wood for love,
And eek that thou no wepne [6] hast in this place,
Thou sholdest nevere out of this grove pace,
That thou ne sholdest dyen of myn hond.
For I defye the seurtee and the bond
Which that thou seyst that I have maad to thee.
What, verray fool, think wel that love is fre,
And I wol love hir, maugre [7] al thy might!
But, for as much thou art a worthy knight,
And wilnest to darreyne [8] hir by batayle,
Have heer my trouthe, to-morwe I wol nat fayle,
With-outen witing [9] of any other wight,
That heer I wol be founden as a knight,
And bringen harneys [10] right ynough for thee;
And chees the beste, and leve the worste for me.

[1] Deceived. [2] None other. [3] Fear, or doubt. [4] Either. [5] Escape. [6] Weapon. [7] Despite. [8] And desirest to contend for her in battle. [9] Knowledge. [10] Arms and armor.

And mete and drinke this night wol I bringe
Ynough for thee, and clothes for thy beddinge.
And, if so be that thou my lady winne,
And sle me in this wode ther I am inne,
Thou mayst wel have thy lady, as for me."
This Palamon answerde: "I graunte it thee."
And thus they been departed til a-morwe,
When ech of hem had leyd his feith to borwe.[1]
O Cupide, out of alle charitee!
O regne,[2] that wolt no felawe have with thee!
Ful sooth is seyd, that love ne lordshipe
Wol noght, hir thankes,[3] have no felaweshipe;
Wel fynden that Arcite and Palamoun.
Arcite is riden anon un-to the toun,
And on the morwe, er it were dayes light,
Ful prively two harneys hath he dight,
Bothe suffisaunt and mete to darreyne
The bataille in the feeld bitwix hem tweyne.
And on his hors, allone as he was born,
He carieth al this harneys him biforn;
And in the grove, at tyme and place y-set,
This Arcite and this Palamon ben met.
Tho chaungen gan the colour in hir face;
Right as the hunter in the regne[4] of Trace,
That stondeth at the gappe with a spere,
Whan hunted is the leoun or the bere,
And hereth him come russhing in the greves,
And breketh bothe bowes and the leves,
And thinketh, "heer cometh my mortel enemy,

[1] In pledge. [2] King. [3] With his good will. [4] Kingdom; cf. Dryden's translation:

"So stands the Thracian herdsman with his spear
Full in the gap, and hopes the hunted bear,
And hears him rustling in the wood, and sees
His course at distance by the bending trees."

With-oute faile, he moot be deed, or I;
For outher I moot sleen him at the gappe,
Or he moot sleen me, if that me mishappe:"
So ferden[1] they, in chaunging of hir hewe,
As fer as everich of hem other knewe.
Ther nas no good day, ne no saluing;
But streight with-outen word or rehersing,
Everich of hem halp for to armen other,
As frendly as he were his owne brother;
And after that, with sharpe speres stronge
They foynen[2] ech at other wonder longe.
Thou mightest wene[3] that this Palamoun
In his fighting were as a wood leoun,
And as a cruel tygre was Arcite:
As wilde bores gonne they to smyte,
That frothen whyte as foom for ire wood.
Up to the ancle foghte they in hir blood.
And in this wyse I lete hem fighting dwelle;
And forth I wol of Theseus yow telle.
The destinee, ministre general,
That executeth in the world over-al
The purveiaunce, that God hath seyn biforn,[4]
So strong it is, that though the world had sworn
The contrarie of a thing, by ye or nay,
Yet somtyme it shal fallen on a day
That falleth nat eft[5] with-inne a thousand yere.
For certeinly oure appetytes here,
Be it of werre, or pees, or hate, or love,
Al is this reuled by the sighte above.
This mene I now by mighty Theseus,
That for to honten is so desirous,
And namely at the grete hert[6] in May,
That in his bed ther daweth him no day,[7]

[1] Fared. [2] Made passes at each other. [3] Believe. [4] Hath foreseen. [5] Again. [6] Hart. [7] No day dawns upon him.

That he nis clad, and redy for to ryde
With hunte[1] and horn, and houndes him bisyde.
For in his hunting hath he swich delyt,
That it is al his Ioye and appetyt
To been him-self the grete hertes bane,
For after Mars he serveth now Diane.[2]
Cleer was the day, as I have told er this,
And Theseus, with alle Ioye and blis,
With his Ipolita, the fayre quene,
And Emelye, clothed al in grene,
On hunting be they riden roially.
And to the grove, that stood ful faste by,
In which ther was an hert, as men him tolde,
Duk Theseus the streighte wey hath holde.
And to the launde[3] he rydeth him ful right,
For thider was the hert wont have his flight,
And over a brook, and so forth in his weye.
This duk wol han a cours at him or tweye
With houndes, swiche as that him list comaunde.
And whan this duk was come un-to the launde,
Under the sonne he loketh, and anon
He was war of Arcite and Palamon,
That foughten breme,[4] as it were bores two;
The brighte swerdes wenten to and fro
So hidously,[5] that with the leste strook
It semed as it wolde felle an ook;
But what they were, no-thing he ne woot.
This duk his courser with his spores smoot,
And at a stert he was bitwix hem two,
And pullede out a swerd and cryed, "ho![6]

[1] Hunter. [2] For this line Dryden has:

"And as he followed Mars before, so now
He serves the goddess of the silver bow."

[3] A hunting ground. [4] Furiously. [5] Dreadfully. [6] An exclamation made by heralds to stop a fight or command silence.

Namore, up peyne of lesing of your heed.
By mighty Mars, he shal anon be deed,
That smyteth any strook, that I may seen!
But telleth me what mister men[1] ye been,
That been so hardy for to fighten here
With-outen Iuge or other officere,
As it were in a listes roially?"
This Palamon answerde hastily,
And seyde: "sire, what nedeth wordes mo?
We have the deeth deserved bothe two.
Two woful wrecches been we, two caytyves,[2]
That been encombred of[3] our owne lyves;
And as thou art a rightful lord and Iuge,
Ne yeve us neither mercy ne refuge.
But sle me first, for seynte[4] charitee;
But sle my felawe eek as wel as me.
Or sle him first; for, though thou knowe it lyte,[5]
This is thy mortal fo, this is Arcite,
That fro thy lond is banished on his heed,
For which he hath deserved to be deed.
For this is he that cam un-to thy gate,
And seyde, that he highte Philostrate.
Thus hath he Iaped thee ful many a yeer,
And thou has maked him thy chief squyer;
And this is he that loveth Emelye.
For sith the day is come that I shal dye,
I make pleynly my confessioun,
That I am thilke woful Palamoun,
That hath thy prisoun broken wikkedly.
I am thy mortal foo, and it am I[6]
That loveth so hote Emelye the brighte,
That I wol dye present in hir sighte.

[1] Men of what profession. [2] Captives. [3] Encumbered with; tired of. [4] Holy; sacred. [5] Little. [6] This was the regular construction in early English.

Therfore I axe deeth and my Iuwyse;[1]
But sle my felawe in the same wyse,
For bothe han we deserved to be slayn."
This worthy duk answerde anon agayn,
And seide, "This is a short conclusioun:
Youre owne mouth, by your confessioun,
Hath dampned you, and I wol it recorde,
It nedeth noght to pyne[2] yow with the corde.
Ye shul be deed, by mighty Mars the rede!"[3]
The quene anon, for verray wommanhede
Gan for to wepe, and so dide Emelye,
And alle the ladies in the compaignye.
Gret pitee was it, as it thoughte hem alle,
That evere swich a chaunce sholde falle;
For gentil men they were, of greet estat,
And no-thing but for love was this debat;
And sawe hir bloody woundes wyde and sore;
And alle cryden, bothe lasse[4] and more,
"Have mercy, lord, up-on us wommen alle!"
And on hir bare knees adoun they falle,
And wolde have kist his feet ther as he stood,
Til at the laste aslaked was his mood;
For pitee renneth sone in gentil herte.[5]
And though he firste for ire quook and sterte,
He hath considered shortly, in a clause,
The trespas of hem bothe, and eek the cause:
And al-though that his ire hir gilt accused,
Yet in his resoun he hem bothe excused;
And thus he thoghte wel, that every man
Wol helpe him-self in love, if that he can,
And eek delivere him-self out of prisoun;
And eek his herte hadde compassioun

[1] Therefore I ask death and my doom. [2] Torment. [3] The red; the bloody. [4] Less. [5] Chaucer has this line four times in his poems. Cf. Dryden: "And pity soonest runs in softest minds."

Of wommen, for they wepen evere in oon;[1]
And in his gentil herte he thoghte anoon,
And softe un-to himself he seyde: "fy
Up-on a lord that wol have no mercy,
But been a leoun, bothe in word and dede,
To hem that been in repentaunce and drede,
As wel as to a proud despitous man,
That wol maynteyne that he first bigan!
That lord hath litel of discrecioun,
That in swich cas can no divisioun,[2]
But weyeth pryde and humblesse after oon."[3]
And shortly, whan his ire is thus agoon,
He gan to loken up with eyen lighte,[4]
And spak thise same wordes al on highte:—
"The god of love, a! *benedicite*,
How mighty and how greet a lord is he!
Ayeins his might ther gayneth none obstacles,
He may be cleped a god for his miracles;
For he can maken at his owne gyse
Of everich herte, as that him list devyse.
Lo heer, this Arcite and this Palamoun,
That quitly[5] weren out of my prisoun,
And mighte han lived in Thebes roially,
And witen[6] I am hir mortal enemy,
And that hir deth lyth in my might also,
And yet hath love, maugree hir eyen two,
Y-broght hem hider bothe for to dye!
Now loketh, is nat that an heigh folye?
Who may nat ben a fool, if that he love?[7]
Bihold, for Goddes sake that sit above,
Se how they blede! be they noght wel arrayed?
Thus hath hir lord, the god of love, y-payed

[1] Together. [2] Knows no distinction. [3] After one mode; according to the same rule. [4] Cheerful. [5] Freely. [6] Know. [7] It is permitted a lover to be a fool.

Hir wages and hir fees for hir servyse!
And yet they wenen for to been ful wyse
That serven love, for aught that may bifalle!
But this is yet the beste game[1] of alle,
That she, for whom they han this Iolitee,[2]
Can hem ther-for as moche thank as me;
She woot namore of al this hote fare,[3]
By God, than woot a cokkow or an hare!
But al moot ben assayed, hoot and cold;
A man moot ben a fool, or yong or old;
I woot it by my-self ful yore agoon:
For in my tyme a servant was I oon.
And therfore, sin I knowe of loves peyne,
And woot how sore it can a man distreyne,
As he that hath ben caught ofte in his las,[4]
I yow foryeve al hoolly[5] this trespas,
At requeste of the quene that kneleth here,
And eek of Emelye, my suster dere.
And ye shul bothe anon un-to me swere,
That nevere-mo ye shul my contree dere,
Ne make werre up-on me night ne day,
But been my frendes in al that ye may;
I yow foryeve this trespas every del."
And they him swore his axing fayre and wel,
And him of lordshipe and of mercy preyde,
And he hem graunteth grace, and thus he seyde:
"To speke of roial lynage and richesse,
Though that she were a quene or a princesse,
Ech of yow bothe is worthy, doutelees,
To wedden when tyme is, but nathelees
I speke as for my suster Emelye,
For whom ye have this stryf and Ielousye,
Ye woot your-self she may not wedden two
At ones, though ye fighten evere-mo:

[1] Sport. [2] Joyfulness (ironical). [3] Hot affair. [4] Snares. [5] Wholly.

That oon of yow, al be him looth or leef,[1]
He moot go pypen [2] in an ivy-leef; [3]
This is to seyn, she may nat now han bothe,
Al be ye nevere so Ielous, ne so wrothe.
And for-thy [4] I yow putte in this degree,
That ech of yow shal have his destinee
As him is shape; [5] and herkneth in what wyse;
Lo, heer your ende of that I shal devyse.
My wil is this, for plat [6] conclusioun,
With-outen any replicacioun,
If that yow lyketh, tak it for the beste,
That everich of yow shal goon wher him leste
Frely, with-outen raunsoun or daunger;
And this day fifty wykes, fer [7] ne ner,[7]
Everich of yow shal bringe an hundred knightes,
Armed for listes up at alle rightes,
Al redy to darreyne hir by bataille.
And this bihote [8] I yow with-outen faille
Up-on my trouthe, and as I am a knight,
That whether [9] of yow bothe that hath might,
This is to seyn, that whether he or thou
May with his hundred, as I spak of now,
Sleen his contrarie, or out of listes dryve,
Him shal I yeve Emelya to wyve,
To whom that fortune yeveth so fair a grace.
The listes shal I maken in this place,
And God so wisly on my soule rewe,[10]
As I shal even Iuge been and trewe.
Ye shul non other ende with me maken,
That oon of yow ne shal be deed or taken.[11]

[1] Pleasing or displeasing. [2] Pipe; whistle. [3] The line is a proverbial expression, signifying that one may overcome his disappointment by any frivolous employment. [4] Therefore. [5] Fit. [6] Plain. [7] Neither further nor nearer. [8] Promise. [9] Whichever. [10] Have mercy. [11] That one of you shall be either slain or taken prisoner.

And if yow thinketh this is wel y-sayd,
Seyeth your avys, and holdeth yow apayd.
This is your ende and your conclusioun."
Who loketh lightly now but Palamoun?
Who springeth up for Ioye but Arcite?
Who couthe telle, or who couthe it endyte,
The Ioye that is maked in the place
Whan Theseus hath doon so fair a grace?
But doun on knees wente every maner wight,[1]
And thanked him with al hir herte and might,
And namely the Thebans ofte sythe.
And thus with good hope and with herte blythe
They take hir leve, and hom-ward gonne they ryde
To Thebes, with his olde walles wyde.

Explicit secunda pars. Sequitur pars tercia.

I trowe men wolde deme it necligence,
If I foryete to tellen the dispence
Of Theseus, that goth so busily
To maken up the listes roially;[2]
That swich a noble theatre as it was,
I dar wel seyn that in this world ther nas.
The circuit a myle was aboute,
Walled of stoon, and diched al with-oute.
Round was the shap, in manere of compas,
Ful of degrees,[3] the heighte of sixty pas,
That, whan a man was set on o degree,
He lette[4] nat his felawe for to see.
Est-ward ther stood a gate of marbel whyt,
West-ward, right swich another in the opposit.
And shortly to concluden, swich a place
Was noon in erthe, as in so litel space;

[1] Every person. [2] Royally. [3] Steps rising one above another. [4] Hindered.

For in the lond ther nas no crafty man,
That geometrie or ars-metrik[1] can,
Ne portreyour, ne kervere of images,
That Theseus ne yaf him mete and wages
The theatre for to maken and devyse.
And for to doon his ryte and sacrifyse,
He est-ward hath up-on the gate above,
In worship of Venus, goddesse of love,
Doon make an auter[2] and an oratorie;
And west-ward, in the mynde and in memorie
Of Mars, he maked hath right swich another,
That coste largely of gold a fother.[3]
And north-ward, in a touret on the wal,
Of alabastre whyt and reed coral
An oratorie riche for to see,
In worship of Dyane of chastitee,
Hath Theseus doon wroght in noble wyse.
But yet hadde I foryeten to devyse
The noble kerving, and the portreitures,
The shap, the contenaunce, and the figures,
That weren in thise oratories thre.

First in the temple of Venus maystow se
Wroght on the wal,[4] ful pitous to biholde,
The broken slepes, and the sykes colde;
The sacred teres, and the waymenting;
The fyry strokes of the desiring,
That loves servaunts in this lyf enduren;
The othes, that hir covenants assuren;[5]
Plesaunce and hope, desyr, fool-hardinesse,
Beautee and youthe, bauderie, richesse,
Charmes and force, lesinges,[6] flaterye,
Dispense,[7] bisynesse, and Ielousye,

[1] Arithmetic. [2] Altar. [3] A wagonload. [4] On the walls within the oratory. The description is copied to some extent from Boccaccio's Teseide. [5] Bind. [6] Lies. [7] Expense.

That wered of yelwe goldes[1] a gerland,
And a cokkow[2] sitting on hir hand;
Festes, instruments, caroles,[3] daunces,
Lust and array, and alle the circumstaunces
Of love, whiche that I rekne and rekne shal,
By ordre weren peynted on the wal,
And mo than I can make of mencioun.
For soothly, al the mount of Citheroun,[4]
Ther Venus hath hir principal dwelling,
Was shewed on the wal in portreying,
With al the gardin, and the lustinesse.[5]
Nat was foryete the porter Ydelnesse,[6]
Ne Narcisus[7] the faire of yore agon,[8]
Ne yet the folye of king Salamon,
Ne yet the grete strengthe of Hercules,
Thenchauntements of Medea[9] and Circes,[10]
Ne of Turnus,[11] with the hardy fiers corage,
The riche Cresus,[12] caytif in servage.
Thus may ye seen that wisdom ne richesse,
Beautee ne sleighte, strengthe, ne hardinesse,
Ne may with Venus holde champartye;[13]
For as hir list the world than may she gye.[14]

[1] The turnsole, a yellow flower. [2] A cuckoo. [3] Round dances. [4] A range of mountains in Greece, sacred to the gods. [5] Mirthfulness. [6] "In the Romaunt of the Rose, Idleness is the porter of the garden in which the rose (Beauty) is kept." [7] A beautiful youth who fell in love with his own image in the water, and, unable to grasp it, pined away and was changed into a flower. [8] Years gone by. [9] A sorceress who fell in love with Jason, leader of the Argonautic expedition, and by the aid of her magic charms enabled him to perform safely the tasks through which he gained the Golden Fleece. [10] Circe was an enchantress mentioned in Homer's Odyssey, who, after inviting men to her feasts, drugged them with wine which changed them to beasts. [11] A king in Italy who made war upon Æneas for his bride Lavinia, who had first been betrothed to him. [12] Crœsus, a king of Lydia, in the sixth century B.C., renowned for his vast wealth. In B.C. 546 he was taken prisoner by Cyrus, upon whom he had made war. [13] Partnership. [14] Guide.

Lo, alle thise folk so caught were in hir las,
Til they for wo ful ofte seyde "allas!"
Suffyceth heer ensamples oon or two,
And though I coude rekne a thousand mo.
The statue of Venus, glorious for to see,
Was naked fleting[1] in the large see,
And fro the navele doun al covered was
With wawes grene, and brighte as any glas.
A citole[2] in hir right hand hadde she,
And on hir heed, ful semely for to see,
A rose gerland, fresh and wel smellinge;
Above hir heed hir dowves flikeringe.[3]
Biforn hir stood hir sone Cupido,
Up-on his shuldres winges hadde he two;
And blynd he was, as it is ofte sene;
A bowe he bar and arwes brighte and kene.
Why sholde I noght as wel eek telle yow al
The portreiture, that was up-on the wal
With-inne the temple of mighty Mars the rede?[4]
Al peynted was the wal, in lengthe and brede,
Lyk to the estres[5] of the grisly[6] place,
That highte the grete temple of Mars in Trace,[7]
In thilke colde frosty regioun,
Ther as Mars hath his sovereyn mansioun.
First on the wal was peynted a foreste,
In which ther dwelleth neither man ne beste,
With knotty knarry bareyn treës olde
Of stubbes[8] sharpe and hidous to biholde;
In which ther ran a rumbel[9] in a swough,[10]
As though a storm sholde bresten every bough:

[1] Floating. According to one legend of her birth, Venus sprang from the sea. [2] A musical instrument. [3] Fluttering. [4] Red, because identified with bloody war. [5] The interior parts. [6] Horrid. [7] Thrace, a country north of the Ægean Sea, corresponding nearly to modern Turkey. [8] Stumps; trunks of trees. [9] A sighing of the wind. [10] Commotion.

And downward from an hille, under a bente,[1]
Ther stood the temple[2] of Mars armipotente,[3]
Wroght al of burned steel, of which thentree[4]
Was long and streit, and gastly for to see.
And ther-out cam a rage and such a vese,[5]
That it made al the gates for to rese.[6]
The northren light in at the dores shoon,
For windowe on the wal ne was ther noon,
Thurgh which men mighten any light discerne.
The dores were alle of adamant eterne,
Y-clenched overthwart and endelong
With iren tough; and, for to make it strong,
Every piler, the temple to sustene,
Was tonne-greet,[7] of iren bright and shene.
Ther saugh I first the derke imagining
Of felonye, and al the compassing;
The cruel ire, as reed as any glede;[8]
The pykepurs,[9] and eek the pale drede;[10]
The smyler with the knyf under the cloke;
The shepne[11] brenning with the blake smoke;
The tresoun of the mordring in the bedde;
The open werre, with woundes al bi-bledde;
Contek,[12] with blody knyf and sharp manace;[13]
Al ful of chirking[14] was that sory place.
The sleere of him-self yet saugh I ther,
His herte-blood hath bathed al his heer;
The nayl y-driven in the shode[15] a-night;
The colde deeth, with mouth gaping up-right.
Amiddes of the temple sat meschaunce,
With disconfort and sory contenaunce.

[1] A declivity. [2] The *painting* of the temple on one of the walls. [3] Powerful in arms. [4] The entrance. [5] A fierce blast and such a rush of wind. [6] Shake. [7] As large around as a tun. [8] A burning coal. [9] Cutpurse. [10] Fear; dread. [11] Stable. [12] Contention. [13] Threat. [14] Properly, the cry of birds; here, disagreeable noises. [15] Top of the head.

Yet saugh I woodnesse[1] laughing in his rage;
Armed compleint, outhees,[2] and fiers outrage.
The careyne[3] in the bush, with throte y-corve:
A thousand slayn, and nat of qualm[4] y-storve;[5]
The tiraunt, with the prey by force y-raft;
The toun destroyed, ther was no-thing laft.
Yet saugh I brent the shippes hoppesteres;[6]
The hunte strangled with the wilde beres:
The sowe freten[7] the child right in the cradel;
The cook y-scalded, for al his longe ladel.
Noght was foryeten by the infortune of Marte;
The carter over-riden with his carte,
Under the wheel ful lowe he lay adoun.
Ther were also, of Martes divisioun,
The barbour, and the bocher, and the smith
That forgeth sharpe swerdes on his stith.[8]
And al above, depeynted in a tour,
Saw I conquest sittinge in greet honour,
With the sharpe swerde over his heed
Hanginge by a sotil twynes threed.[9]
Depeynted was the slaughtre of Iulius,[10]
Of grete Nero,[11] and of Antonius;[12]
Al be that thilke tyme they were unborn,
Yet was hir deeth depeynted ther-biforn,
By manasinge[13] of Mars,[14] right by figure;
So was it shewed in that portreiture

[1] Madness. [2] Outcries. [3] Dead bodies; carrion. [4] Hunger. [5] Dead. [6] Dancers. [7] Devouring. [8] Anvil. [9] The line alludes to the story of Damocles, who, having extolled the good fortune of Dionysius, tyrant of Syracuse, was invited by the latter to sit at a feast beneath a sword suspended by a single horsehair, typical of the tyrant's enjoyment of power. [10] Caius Julius Cæsar, the famous Roman general, statesman, author, and orator, who was assassinated by conspiracy on the ides of March, B. C. 44. [11] Roman emperor in the first century A.D., notorious for his cruelty. [12] Mark Antony, the famous Roman general, who, after Cæsar's death, B.C. 42, was made a triumvir. [13] Menacing. [14] The planet Mars.

As is depeynted in the sterres above,
Who shal be slayn or elles deed for love.
Suffyceth oon ensample in stories olde,
I may not rekne hem alle, thogh I wolde.
The statue of Mars up-on a carte[1] stood,
Armed, and loked grim as he were wood;
And over his heed ther shynen two figures
Of sterres, that been cleped in scriptures,
That oon Puella,[2] that other Rubeus.[2]
This god of armes was arrayed thus:—
A wolf ther stood biforn him at his feet
With eyen rede, and of a man he eet;
With sotil pencel was depeynt this storie,
In redoutinge[3] of Mars and of his glorie.
Now to the temple of Diane the chaste
As shortly as I can I wol me haste,
To telle yow al the descripcioun.
Depeynted been the walles up and doun
Of hunting and of shamfast chastitee.
Ther saugh I how woful Calistopee,[4]
Whan that Diane agreved was with here,
Was turned from a womman to a bere,
And after was she maad the lode-sterre;[4]
Thus was it peynt, I can say yow no ferre;
Hir sone is eek a sterre, as men may see.
Ther saugh I Dane,[5] y-turned til a tree,
I mene nat the goddesse Diane,
But Penneus doughter, which that highte Dane.

[1] Chariot. [2] "The names of two figures in geomancy, representing two constellations in the heavens; Puella signifieth Mars retrograde, and Rubeus Mars direct" (TYRWHITT). [3] Reverence. [4] Callisto, one of Jupiter's favorites, was changed by Juno into a bear. Afterwards, according to one version of the legend, she and her son Arcas were slain by Diana and changed by Jupiter to stars. [5] The nymph Daphne, daughter of the river god Peneus, being pursued by Apollo, who loved her, besought Diana to transform her into a laurel tree, and her prayer was granted.

Ther saugh I Attheon[1] an hert y-maked,
For vengeaunce that he saugh Diane al naked;
I saugh how that his houndes have him caught,
And freten him, for that they knewe him naught.
Yet peynted was a litel forther-moor,[2]
How Atthalante[3] hunted the wilde boor,
And Meleagre, and many another mo,
For which Diane wroughte him care and wo.
Ther saugh I many another wonder storie,
The whiche me list nat drawen to memorie.[4]
This goddesse on an hert ful hye seet,
With smale houndes al aboute hir feet;
And undernethe hir feet she hadde a mone,
Wexing it was, and sholde wanie sone.
In gaude grene hir statue clothed was,
With bowe in honde, and arwes in a cas.
Hir eyen caste she ful lowe adoun,
Ther Pluto hath his derke regioun.
A womman travailinge was hir biforn,
But, for hir child so longe was unborn,
Ful pitously Lucyna[5] gan she calle,
And seyde, "help, for thou mayst best of alle."
Wel couthe he peynten lyfly[6] that it wroghte,
With many a florin he the hewes[7] boghte.

[1] Actæon, in Greek mythology, a hunter who, having seen Diana while bathing, was changed by her into a stag and torn to pieces by his own dogs. [2] Further on. [3] The Calydonian hunt was the chase for a savage boar sent by Diana to punish Œneus, king of Calydon (a city in western Greece), for a neglect of sacrifice. Meleager, or Œnides (son of Œneus), slew the boar, and gave the head and hide, the "prize," to the beautiful huntress Atalanta, who had been the first to strike the boar. Diana provoked a contest over the prize, during which Meleager slew his mother's brothers. She, in revenge, burned the log whereon depended her son's life, and he died a sudden death. [4] Not call to mind. [5] Under the title of Lucina, Diana was worshiped by the Romans as the goddess who presided over childbirth. [6] Lifelike. [7] Colors.

Now been thise listes maad, and Theseus,
That at his grete cost arrayed thus
The temples and the theatre every del,[1]
Whan it was doon, him lyked wonder wel.
But stinte I wol of Theseus a lyte,
And speke of Palamon and of Arcite.
The day approcheth of hir retourninge,
That everich sholde an hundred knightes bringe,
The bataille to darreyne,[2] as I yow tolde;
And til Athenes, hir covenant for to holde,
Hath everich of hem broght an hundred knightes
Wel armed for the werre at alle rightes.[3]
And sikerly, ther trowed many a man
That nevere, sithen that the world bigan,
As for to speke of knighthod of hir hond,
As fer as God hath maked see or lond,
Nas, of so fewe, so noble a compaignye.
For every wight that loved chivalrye,
And wolde, his thankes,[4] han a passant[5] name,
Hath preyed that he mighte ben of that game;
And wel was him, that ther-to chosen was.
For if ther fille to-morwe swich a cas,
Ye knowen wel, that every lusty knight,
That loveth paramours,[6] and hath his might,
Were it in Engelond, or elles-where,
They wolde, hir thankes, wilnen to be there.
To fighte for a lady, *benedicite!*[7]
It were a lusty sighte for to see.
And right so ferden[8] they with Palamon.
With him ther wenten knightes many oon;
Som wol ben armed in an habergeoun,[9]
In a brest-plat and in a light gipoun;[10]

[1] Every part. [2] Contend. [3] At all points. [4] With his good will. [5] Surpassing. [6] Lovers. [7] Here pronounced as a trisyllable, ben'ci-te. [8] Fared. [9] Coat of mail. [10] A short cassock.

And somme woln have a peyre plates large;
And somme woln have a Pruce sheld, or a targe;
Somme woln been armed on hir legges weel,
And have an ax, and somme a mace of steel.
Ther nis no newe gyse, that it nas old.[1]
Armed were they, as I have you told,
Everich after his opinioun.[2]
Ther maistow seen coming with Palamoun
Ligurge him-self, the grete king of Trace;
Blak was his berd, and manly was his face.
The cercles of his eyen in his heed,
They gloweden bitwixe yelow and reed;
And lyk a griffoun loked he aboute,
With kempe[3] heres on his browes stoute;
His limes grete, his braunes[4] harde and stronge,
His shuldres brode, his armes rounde and longe.
And as the gyse was in his contree,
Ful hye up-on a char of gold stood he,
With foure white boles[5] in the trays.[6]
In-stede of cote-armure over his harnays,
With nayles yelwe, and brighte as any gold,
He hadde a beres skin, col-blak, for-old.[7]
His longe heer was kembd[8] bihynde his bak,
As any ravenes fether it shoon for-blak.
A wrethe of gold arm-greet,[9] of huge wighte,
Upon his heed, set ful of stones brighte,
Of fyne rubies and of dyamaunts.
Aboute his char ther wenten whyte alaunts,[10]
Twenty and mo, as grete as any steer,
To hunten at the leoun or the deer,
And folwed him, with mosel[11] faste y-bounde,
Colers of golde, and torets[12] fyled rounde.

[1] The line seems to mean that there is no new thing that is not old. [2] Fancy, or notion. [3] Shaggy. [4] Muscles. [5] Bulls. [6] Traces. [7] Very old. [8] Combed. [9] Thick as one's arm. [10] Mastiffs. [11] Muzzle. [12] Rings.

An hundred lordes hadde he in his route
Armed ful wel, with hertes sterne and stoute.
With Arcita, in stories as men fynde,
The grete Emetreus, the king of Inde,
Up-on a stede bay, trapped in steel,
Covered in cloth of gold diapred[1] wel,
Cam ryding lyk the god of armes, Mars.
His cote-armure was of cloth of Tars,[2]
Couched[3] with perles whyte and rounde and grete.
His sadel was of brend[4] gold newe y-bete;[5]
A mantelet up-on his shuldre hanginge
Bret-ful of rubies reede, as fyr sparklinge.
His crispe heer lyk ringes was y-ronne,[6]
And that was yelow, and glitered as the sonne.
His nose was heigh, his eyen bright citryn,
His lippes rounde, his colour was sangwyn,
A fewe fraknes[7] in his face y-spreynd,[8]
Betwixen yelow and somdel blak y-meynd,[9]
And as a leoun he his loking caste.
Of fyve and twenty yeer his age I caste.[10]
His berd was wel bigonne for to springe
His voys was as a trompe thunderinge.
Up-on his heed he wered of laurer grene
A gerlond fresh and lusty for to sene.
Up-on his hand he bar, for his deduyt,[11]
An egle tame, as eny lilye whyt.
An hundred lordes hadde he with him there,
Al armed, sauf[12] hir heddes, in al hir gere,
Ful richely in alle maner thinges.
For trusteth wel, that dukes, erles, kinges,
Were gadered in this noble compaignye,
For love, and for encrees of chivalrye.

[1] Diversified with figures. [2] A kind of silk. [3] Trimmed. [4] Wrought in the fire. [5] Beaten; manufactured. [6] His hair curled in ringlets. [7] Freckles. [8] Sprinkled. [9] Mixed. [10] Reckon. [11] Delight. [12] Except.

Aboute this king ther ran on every part
Ful many a tame leoun and lepart.
And in this wyse thise lordes, alle and some,[1]
Been on the Sonday to the citee come
Aboute pryme, and in the toun alight.
This Theseus, this duk, this worthy knight,
Whan he had broght hem in-to his citee,
And inned[2] hem, everich in his degree,
He festeth hem, and doth so greet labour
To esen hem, and doon hem al honour,
That yet men weneth that no mannes wit
Of noon estat ne coude amenden it.
The minstralcye, the service at the feste,
The grete yiftes to the moste and leste,
The riche array of Theseus paleys,[3]
Ne who sat first ne last up-on the deys,
What ladies fairest been or best daunsinge,
Or which of hem can dauncen best and singe,
Ne who most felingly speketh of love:
What haukes sitten on the perche above,
What houndes liggen[4] on the floor adoun:
Of al this make I now no mencioun;
But al theffect, that thinketh me the beste;
Now comth the poynt, and herkneth if yow leste.
The Sonday night, er[5] day bigan to springe,
When Palamon the larke herde singe,
Although it nere nat day by houres two,
Yet song the larke, and Palamon also.
With holy herte, and with an heigh corage
He roos, to wenden on his pilgrimage
Un-to the blisful Citherea[6] benygne,
I mene Venus, honurable and dygne.

[1] One and all. [2] Accommodated them with quarters. [3] Palace. [4] Lie. [5] Before. [6] A surname of Venus, from the island of Cythera, southeast of Greece, near which she sprang from the foam of the sea.

And in hir houre[1] he walketh forth a pas
Un-to the listes, ther hir temple was,
And doun he kneleth, and with humble chere
And herte soor, he seide as ye shul here.
" Faireste of faire, o lady myn Venus,
Doughter to Iove, and spouse of Vulcanus,[2]
Thou gladere[3] of the mount of Citheroun,[4]
For thilke love thou haddest to Adoun,[5]
Have pitee of my bittre teres smerte,
And tak myn humble preyere at thin herte.
Allas! I ne have no langage to telle
Theffectes ne the torments of myn helle;
Myn herte may myne harmes nat biwreye;[6]
I am so confus, that I can noght seye.
But mercy, lady bright, that knowest wele
My thought, and seest what harmes that I fele,
Considere al this, and rewe[7] up-on my sore,
As wisly as I shal for evermore,
Emforth[8] my might, thy trewe servant be,
And holden werre alway with chastitee;
That make I myn avow, so ye me helpe.
I kepe noght of armes for to yelpe,[9]
Ne I ne axe nat to-morwe to have victorie,
Ne renoun in this caas, ne veyne glorie
Of pris[10] of armes blowen up and doun,
But I wolde have fully possessioun
Of Emelye, and dye in thy servyse;
Fynd thou the manere how, and in what wyse.
I recche nat, but it may bettre be,
To have victorie of hem, or they of me,

[1] Venus' hour was the second hour, reckoning from sunrise. [2] Vulcan, god of fire. [3] One who makes glad. [4] See Note 4, p. 91. [5] Adonis, a beautiful youth, beloved of Venus, who died, while hunting, from a wound inflicted by a boar. [6] Not set forth my troubles. [7] Have pity. [8] To the extent of. [9] I care not to boast of deeds of arms. [10] Prize.

So that I have my lady in myne armes.
For though so be that Mars is god of armes,
Your vertu is so greet in hevene above,
That, if yow list, I shal wel have my love.
Thy temple wol I worshipe everemo,
And on thyn auter, wher I ryde or go,[1]
I wol doon sacrifice, and fyres bete.[2]
And if ye wol nat so, my lady swete,
Than preye I thee, to-morwe with a spere
That Arcita me thurgh the herte bere.
Thanne rekke I noght, whan I have lost my lyf,
Though that Arcita winne hir to his wyf.
This is theffect and ende of my preyere,
Yif me my love, thou blisful lady dere."
Whan thorisoun[3] was doon of Palamon,
His sacrifice he dide, and that anon
Ful pitously, with alle circumstaunces,
Al telle I noght as now his observaunces.
But atte laste the statue of Venus shook,
And made a signe, wher-by that he took
That his preyere accepted was that day.
For thogh the signe shewed a delay,
Yet wiste he wel that graunted was his bone;
And with glad herte he wente him hoom ful sone.
The thridde houre inequal[4] that Palamon
Bigan to Venus temple for to gon,
Up roos the sonne, and up roos Emelye,
And to the temple of Diane gan hye.
Hir maydens, that she thider with hir ladde,
Ful redily with hem the fyr they hadde,
Thencens, the clothes, and the remenant al
That to the sacrifyce longen[5] shal;

[1] Whether I ride or walk. [2] Kindle. [3] The prayer. [4] The day, from sunrise to sunset, and the night, from sunset to sunrise, were each divided into twelve hours. Hence the hours of the day were unequal. [5] Belong.

The hornes fulle of meth,[1] as was the gyse;
Ther lakked noght to doon hir sacrifyse.
Smoking the temple, ful of clothes faire,
This Emelye with herte debonaire
Hir body wessh[2] with water of a welle;
But how she dide hir ryte I dar nat telle,
But it be any thing in general;
And yet it were a game[3] to heren al;
To him that meneth wel, it were no charge:
But it is good a man ben at his large.
Hir brighte heer was kempt,[4] untressed al;
A coroune of a grene ook cerial[5]
Up-on hir heed was set ful fair and mete.
Two fyres on the auter gan she bete,
And dide hir thinges, as men may biholde
In Stace of Thebes,[6] and thise bokes olde.
Whan kindled was the fyr, with pitous chere[7]
Un-to Diane she spak, as ye may here.
"O chaste goddesse of the wodes grene,
To whom bothe hevene and erthe and see is sene,
Quene of the regne of Pluto[8] derk and lowe,
Goddesse of maydens, that myn herte hast knowe
Ful many a yeer, and woost what I desyre,
As keep me fro thy vengeaunce and thyn ire,
That Attheon[9] aboghte[10] cruelly.
Chaste goddesse, wel wostow[11] that I
Desyre to been a mayden al my lyf,
Ne nevere wol I be no love ne wyf.

[1] Mead, a drink made of honey. [2] Washed. [3] A pleasure. [4] Unbound. [5] A species of oak. [6] Statius, a Roman poet (A.D. 45–96), embodied in his Thebaid the legends connected with the war of the Seven against Thebes. [7] Countenance. [8] Proserpina, wife of Pluto, and queen of the lower regions, was sometimes identified with Diana, goddess of the moon and of the chase, and protectress of maidens. Diana is called Diva Triformis, because worshiped under three forms,—in heaven as goddess of the moon, on earth as the huntress, and in hell as Proserpina. [9] See Note 1, p. 96. [10] Suffered for. [11] Knowest.

I am, thou woost, yet of thy compaignye,
A mayde, and love hunting and venerye,[1]
And for to walken in the wodes wylde,
And noght to been a wyf, and be with chylde.
Nought wol I knowe the compaignye of man.
Now help me, lady, sith ye may and can,
For tho thre formes[2] that thou hast in thee.
And Palamon, that hath swich love to me,
And eek Arcite, that loveth me so sore,
This grace I preye thee with-oute more,
As sende love and pees bitwixe hem two;
And fro me torne awey hir hertes so,
That al hir hote love, and hir desyr,
And al hir bisy[3] torment, and hir fyr
Be queynt,[4] or turned in another place;
And if so be thou wolt do me no grace,
Or if my destinee be shapen so,
That I shal nedes have oon of hem two,
As[5] sende me him that most desyreth me.
Bihold, goddesse of clene chastitee,
The bittre teres that on my chekes falle.
Sin thou art mayde, and kepere of us alle,
My maydenhode thou kepe and wel conserve,
And whyl I live a mayde, I wol thee serve."
The fyres brenne up-on the auter clere,
Whyl Emelye was thus in hir preyere;
But sodeinly she saugh a sighte queynte,[6]
For right anon oon of the fyres queynte,[4]
And quiked[7] agayn, and after that anon
That other fyr was queynt, and al agon;
And as it queynte, it made a whistelinge,
As doon thise wete brondes[8] in hir brenninge,

[1] Field sports in general. [2] See Note 8, p. 103. [3] Anxious. [4] Quenched. [5] An expletive expressing a wish, followed generally by an imperative. [6] Strange. [7] Quickened. [8] Firebrand.

And at the brondes ende out-ran anoon
As it were blody dropes many oon;
For which so sore agast was Emelye,
That she was wel ny mad, and gan to crye,
For she ne wiste what it signifyed;
But only for the fere thus hath she cryed,
And weep, that it was pitee for to here.
And ther-with-al Diane gan appere,
With bowe in hond, right as an hunteresse,
And seyde: "Doghter, stint thyn hevinesse.
Among the goddes hye it is affermed,
And by eterne word write and confermed,
Thou shalt ben wedded un-to oon of tho
That han for thee so muchel care and wo;
But un-to which of hem I may nat telle.
Farwel, for I ne may no lenger dwelle.
The fyres which that on myn auter brenne
Shul thee declaren,[1] er that thou go henne,
Thyn aventure of love, as in this cas."
And with that word, the arwes in the cas
Of the goddesse clateren[2] faste and ringe,
And forth she wente, and made a vanisshinge;
For which this Emelye astoned[3] was,
And seyde, "What amounteth[4] this, allas!
I putte me in thy protecciouN,
Diane, and in thy disposicioun."
And hoom she goth anon the nexte[5] weye.
This is theffect, ther is namore to seye.
The nexte houre of Mars folwinge this,
Arcite un-to the temple walked is[6]
Of fierse Mars, to doon his sacrifyse,
With alle the rytes of his payen wyse.[7]

[1] Shall declare to thee. "This is improper, as the fires have already declared the event of the combat" (TYRWHITT). [2] Clatter; rattle. [3] Astonished. [4] Signifies. [5] Nearest. [6] Has walked. [7] Of his pagan custom.

With pitous herte and heigh devocioun,
Right thus to Mars he seyde his orisoun:
"O stronge god, that in the regnes colde
Of Trace honoured art and lord y-holde,
And hast in every regne and every lond
Of armes al the brydel in thyn hond,
And hem fortunest as thee list devyse,[1]
Accept of me my pitous sacrifyse.
If so be that my youthe may deserve,
And that my might be worthy for to serve
Thy godhede, that I may been oon of thyne,
Than preye I thee to rewe up-on my pyne.
For thilke peyne, and thilke hote fyr,
In which thou whylom brendest for desyr,

. . . . . .

For thilke sorwe that was in thyn herte,
Have routhe as wel up-on my peynes smerte.
I am yong and unkonning,[3] as thou wost,
And, as I trowe, with love offended most,
That evere was any lyves creature;[4]
For she, that doth me al this wo endure,
Ne reccheth nevere wher I sinke or flete.[5]
And wel I woot, er she me mercy hete,[6]
I moot with strengthe winne hir in the place;
And wel I woot, withouten help or grace
Of thee, ne may my strengthe noght availle.
Than help me, lord, to-morwe in my bataille,
For thilke fyr that whylom brente thee,
As wel as thilke fyr now brenneth me;
And do[7] that I to-morwe have victorie.
Myn be the travaille, and thyn be the glorie!
Thy soverein temple wol I most honouren
Of any place, and alwey most labouren

[1] Control their fortunes as you please. [2] Grief. [3] Ignorant. [4] Living creature. [5] Float; swim. [6] Promise. [7] Bring to pass.

In thy plesaunce and in thy craftes stronge,
And in thy temple I wol my baner honge,
And alle the armes of my compaignye;
And evere-mo, un-to that day I dye,
Eterne fyr I wol biforn thee fynde.
And eek to this avow I wol me bynde:
My berd, myn heer that hongeth long adoun,
That nevere yet ne felte offensioun
Of rasour nor of shere, I wol the yive,
And ben thy trewe servant whyl I live.
Now, lord, have routhe up-on my sorwes sore,
Yif me victorie, I aske thee namore."
The preyere stinte[1] of Arcita the stronge,
The ringes on the temple-dore that honge,
And eek the dores, clatereden ful faste,
Of which Arcita som-what him agaste.
The fyres brende up-on the auter brighte,
That it gan al the temple for to lighte;
And swete smel the ground anon up-yaf,[2]
And Arcita anon his hand up-haf,[3]
And more encens in-to the fyr he caste,
With othere rytes mo; and atte laste
The statue of Mars bigan his hauberk ringe.
And with that soun he herde a murmuringe
Ful lowe and dim, that sayde thus, "Victorie."[4]
For which he yaf to Mars honour and glorie.
And thus with Ioye, and hope wel to fare,
Arcite anon un-to his inne is fare,
As fayn as fowel is of the brighte sonne.[5]
And right anon swich stryf ther is bigonne
For thilke graunting, in the hevene above,
Bitwixe Venus, the goddesse of love,

[1] Ended. [2] Gave up. [3] Uplifted. [4] Cf. Dryden: "Half sunk and half pronounced the word of Victory." [5] As joyful as is a bird on account of the bright sun.

And Mars, the sterne god armipotente,
That Iupiter was bisy it to stente;[1]
Til that the pale Saturnus[2] the colde,
That knew so manye of aventures olde,
Fond in his olde experience an art,
That he ful sone hath plesed every part.
As sooth is sayd, elde[3] hath greet avantage,
In elde is bothe wisdom and usage;
Men may the olde at-renne,[4] and noght at-rede.[5]
Saturne anon, to stinten stryf and drede,
Al be it that it is agayn his kynde,[6]
Of al this stryf he gan remedie fynde.
"My dere doughter Venus," quod Saturne,
"My cours, that hath so wyde for to turne,[7]
Hath more power than woot any man.
Myn is the drenching in the see so wan;
Myn is the prison in the derke cote;[8]
Myn is the strangling and hanging by the throte;
The murmure, and the cherles rebelling,
The groyning, and the pryve[9] empoysoning:
I do vengeance and pleyn correccioun,
Whyl I dwelle in the signe of the leoun.
Myn is the ruine of the hye halles,
The falling of the toures and of the walles
Up-on the mynour or the carpenter.
I slow Sampsoun in shaking the piler;[10]
And myne be the maladyes colde,
The derke tresons, and the castes[11] olde;

[1] Stop. [2] Father of Jupiter, and god of agriculture. This description of Saturn is due to a confusion of the god with the planet. It was the influence of the planet, not of the god, that was considered baleful. For Italy was called Saturnia, or "Land of Plenty," in honor of Saturn, who taught the people agriculture and introduced among them civilization and morality. [3] Old age. [4] Outrun. [5] Outwit. [6] Against his nature. [7] The "cours" of Saturn is his orbit, at that time supposed to be the largest. [8] Dwelling. [9] Secret. [10] See Judges xvi. 26–30. [11] Plots.

My loking[1] is the fader of pestilence.
Now weep namore, I shal doon diligence[2]
That Palamon, that is thyn owene knight,
Shal have his lady, as thou hast him hight.
Though Mars shal helpe his knight, yet nathelees
Bitwixe yow ther moot be som tyme pees,
Al be ye noght of o complexioun,
That causeth al day swich divisioun.
I am thin ayel,[3] redy at thy wille;
Weep thou namore, I wol thy lust fulfille."
Now wol I stinten of the goddes above,
Of Mars, and of Venus, goddesse of love,
And telle yow, as pleynly as I can,
The grete effect, for which that I bigan.

Explicit tercia pars. Sequitur pars quarta.

Greet was the feste in Athenes that day,
And eek the lusty seson of that May
Made every wight to been in swich plesaunce,
That al that Monday Iusten they and daunce,
And spenden it in Venus heigh servyse.
But by the cause that they sholde aryse
Erly, for to seen the grete fight,
Unto hir reste wente they at night.
And on the morwe, whan that day gan springe,
Of hors and harneys, noyse and clateringe
Ther was in hostelryes al aboute;
And to the paleys rood ther many a route[4]
Of lordes, up-on stedes and palfreys.
Ther maystow seen devysing of herneys
So uncouth and so riche, and wroght so weel
Of goldsmithrie, of browding,[5] and of steel;

[1] Glance; look. [2] I shall take care. [3] Grandfather. [4] Company. [5] Embroidery.

The sheeldes brighte, testers,[1] and trappures;
Gold-hewen helmes, hauberks, cote-armures;
Lordes in paraments[2] on hir courseres,
Knightes of retenue, and eek squyeres
Nailinge the speres, and helmes bokelinge,
Gigginge[3] of sheeldes, with layneres[4] lacinge;
Ther as need is, they weren no-thing ydel;
The fomy stedes on the golden brydel
Gnawinge, and faste the armurers also
With fyle and hamer prikinge to and fro;
Yemen on fote, and communes many oon
With shorte staves, thikke as they may goon;
Pypes, trompes, nakers,[5] clariounes,
That in the bataille blowen blody sounes;
The paleys ful of peples up and doun,
Heer thre, ther ten, holding hir questioun,
Divyninge of thise Thebane knightes two.
Somme seyden thus, somme seyde it shal be so;
Somme helden with him with the blake berd,
Somme with the balled, somme with the thikke herd;
Somme sayde, he loked grim and he wolde fighte;
He hath a sparth[6] of twenty pound of wighte.
Thus was the halle ful of divyninge,
Longe after that the sonne gan to springe.
The grete Theseus, that of his sleep awaked
With minstralcye and noyse that was maked,
Held yet the chambre of his paleys riche,
Til that the Thebane knightes, bothe y-liche
Honoured, were into the paleys fet.
Duk Theseus was at a window set,
Arrayed right as he were a god in trone.[7]
The peple presseth thider-ward ful sone

[1] Helmets. [2] Ornamental trappings. [3] Clattering. Some texts have "gniding," polishing. [4] Straps. [5] Drums. [6] Battle-ax. [7] On his throne.

Him for to seen, and doon heigh reverence,
And eek to herkne his hest and his sentence.
An heraud on a scaffold made an ho,[1]
Til al the noyse of the peple was y-do;
And whan he saugh the peple of noyse al stille,
Tho shewed he the mighty dukes wille.
"The lord hath of his heigh discrecioun
Considered, that it were destruccioun
To gentil blood, to fighten in the gyse
Of mortal bataille now in this empryse;
Wherfore, to shapen that they shul not dye,
He wol his firste purpos modifye.
No man therfor, up peyne of los of lyf,
No maner shot,[2] ne pollax, ne short knyf
Into the listes sende, or thider bringe;
Ne short swerd for to stoke,[3] with poynt bytinge,[4]
No man ne drawe, ne bere by his syde.
Ne no man shal un-to his felawe ryde
But o cours, with a sharp y-grounde spere;
Foyne,[5] if him list, on fote, him-self to were.[6]
And he that is at meschief, shal be take,
And noght slayn, but be broght un-to the stake
That shal ben ordeyned on either syde;
But thider he shal by force, and ther abyde.
And if so falle, the chieftayn[7] be take
On either syde, or elles sleen his make,[8]
No lenger shal the turneyinge laste.
God spede yow; goth forth, and ley on faste.
With long swerd and with maces fight your fille.
Goth now your wey; this is the lordes wille."
The voys of peple touchede the hevene,
So loude cryden they with mery stevene:[9]

[1] See Note 6, p. 83. [2] Arrows; darts; missiles of any sort. [3] Stab. [4] Sharp. [5] Make a pass. [6] Defend. [7] Chieftain. [8] Mate; fellow. [9] Voice.

"God save swich a lord, that is so good,
He wilneth no destruccioun of blood!"
Up gon the trompes and the melodye.
And to the listes rit the compaignye
By ordinaunce, thurgh-out the citee large,
Hanged with cloth of gold, and nat with sarge.[1]
Ful lyk a lord this noble duk gan ryde,
Thise two Thebanes up-on either syde;
And after rood the quene, and Emelye,
And after that another compaignye,
Of oon and other, after hir degree.
And thus they passen thurgh-out the citee,
And to the listes come they by tyme.
It nas not of the day yet fully pryme,
Whan set was Theseus ful riche and hye,
Ipolita the quene and Emelye,
And other ladies in degrees aboute.
Un-to the seetes presseth al the route;
And west-ward, thurgh the gates under Marte,
Arcite, and eek the hundred of his parte,
With baner reed is entred right anon;
And in that selve moment Palamon
Is under Venus, est-ward in the place,
With baner whyt, and hardy chere and face.
In al the world, to seken up and doun,
So even with-outen variacioun,
Ther nere swiche compaignyes tweye.
For ther nas noon so wys that coude seye,
That any hadde of other avauntage
Of worthinesse, ne of estaat, ne age,
So even were they chosen, for to gesse.
And in two renges[2] faire they hem dresse.
Whan that hir names rad were everichoon,
That in hir nombre gyle[3] were ther noon,

[1] Serge. [2] Lines. [3] Error.

Tho were the gates shet, and cried was loude:
"Do now your devoir, yonge knightes proude!"
The heraudes lefte hir priking up and doun;
Now ringen trompes loude and clarioun;
Ther is namore to seyn, but west and est
In goon the speres ful sadly in arest;[1]
In goth the sharpe spore in-to the syde.
Ther seen men who can Iuste, and who can ryde;
Ther shiveren shaftes up-on sheeldes thikke;
He feleth thurgh the herte-spoon[2] the prikke.
Up springen speres twenty foot on highte;
Out goth the swerdes as the silver brighte.
The helmes they to-hewen[3] and to-shrede;[4]
Out brest the blood, with sterne stremes rede.
With mighty maces the bones they to-breste.[5]
He thurgh the thikkeste of the throng gan threste.
Ther stomblen steedes stronge, and doun goth alle.
He[6] rolleth under foot as doth a balle.
He[6] foyneth on his feet with his tronchoun,
And he him hurtleth with his hors adoun.
He thurgh the body is hurt, and sithen[7] take,
Maugree his heed, and broght un-to the stake,
As forward was, right ther he moste abyde;
Another lad[8] is on that other syde.
And som tyme doth hem Theseus to reste,
Hem to refresshe, and drinken if hem leste.
Ful ofte a-day han thise Thebanes two
Togidre y-met, and wroght his felawe wo;
Unhorsed hath ech other of hem tweye.
Ther nas no tygre in the vale of Galgopheye,[9]

[1] The spears are set firmly in the *rest;* couched for attack. [2] The center of the breast. [3] Cut to pieces. [4] Shattered. [5] Burst. [6] One—another. [7] Therefore. [8] Led; carried. [9] There was a town called Galapha in Mauritania; also a vale of Gargaphie, mentioned by Ovid, where Actæon was turned into a stag. See Note 1, p. 96.

Whan that hir whelp is stole, whan it is lyte,
So cruel on the hunte, as is Arcite
For Ielous herte upon this Palamoun:
Ne in Belmarye[1] ther nis so fel leoun,
That hunted is, or for his hunger wood,
Ne of his praye desyreth so the blood,
As Palamon to sleen his foo Arcite.
The Ielous strokes on hir helmes byte;
Out renneth blood on bothe hir sydes rede.
Som tyme an ende ther is of every dede;
For er the sonne un-to the reste wente,
The stronge king Emetreus gan hente
This Palamon, as he faught with Arcite,
And made his swerd depe in his flesh to byte;
And by the force of twenty is he take
Unyolden,[2] and y-drawe unto the stake.
And in the rescous[3] of this Palamoun
The stronge king Ligurge is born adoun;
And king Emetreus, for al his strengthe,
Is born out of his sadel a swerdes lengthe,
So hitte him Palamon er he were take;
But al for noght, he was broght to the stake.
His hardy herte mighte him helpe naught;
He moste abyde, whan that he was caught,
By force, and eek by composicioun.
Who sorweth now but woful Palamoun,
That moot namore goon agayn to fighte?
And whan that Theseus hadde seyn this sighte,
Un-to the folk that foghten thus echon[4]
He cryde, "Ho! namore, for it is don!
I wol be trewe Iuge, and no partye.
Arcite of Thebes shal have Emelye,
That by his fortune hath hir faire y-wonne."
Anon ther is a noyse of peple bigonne

[1] See Note 13, p. 25. [2] Unyielding. [3] Rescue. [4] Each one.

For Ioye of this, so loude and heigh with-alle,
It semed that the listes sholde falle.
What carf now faire Venus doon above?
What seith she now? what doth this quene of love?
But wepeth so, for wanting of hir wille,
Til that hir teeres in the listes fille;
She seyde: "I am ashamed, doutelees."
Saturnus seyde: "Doghter, hold thy pees.
Mars hath his wille, his knight hath al his bone,[1]
And, by myn heed, thou shalt ben esed sone."
The trompes with the loude minstralcye,
The heraudes, that ful loude yolle and crye,
Been in hir wele for Ioye of daun Arcite.
But herkneth me, and stinteth now a lyte,
Which a[2] miracle ther bifel anon.
This fierse Arcite hath of his helm y-don,
And on a courser, for to shewe his face,
He priketh endelong the large place,
Loking upward up-on this Emelye;
And she agayn him caste a frendlich yë,
(For wommen, as to speken in comune,
They folwen al the favour of fortune,)
And she was al his chere, as in his herte.[3]
Out of the ground a furie infernal sterte,
From Pluto sent, at requeste of Saturne,
For which his hors for fere gan to turne,
And leep asyde, and foundred[4] as he leep;
And, er that Arcite may taken keep,[5]
He pighte[6] him on the pomel of his heed,
That in the place he lay as he were deed,
His brest to-brosten with his sadel-bowe.
As blak he lay as any cole or crowe,

[1] His prayer has been granted. [2] What a. "It is scarcely necessary to observe that *which* was often used for *who* and *what*" (TYRWHITT). [3] He was as joyful in countenance as in heart. [4] Fell. [5] Care. [6] Pitched.

So was the blood y-ronnen in his face.
Anon he was y-born out of the place
With herte soor, to Theseus paleys.
Tho was he corven[1] out of his harneys,
And in a bed y-brought ful faire and blyve,[2]
For he was yet in memorie[3] and alyve,
And alway crying after Emelye.

Duk Theseus, with al his compaignye,
Is comen hoom to Athenes his citee,
With alle blisse and greet solempnitee.
Al be it that this aventure was falle,
He nolde noght disconforten hem alle.
Men seyde eek, that Arcite shal nat dye,
He shal ben heled of his maladye.
And of another thing they were as fayn,[4]
That of hem alle was ther noon y-slayn,
Al were they sore y-hurt, and namely oon,
That with a spere was thirled[5] his brest-boon.
To othere woundes, and to broken armes,
Some hadden salves, and some hadden charmes,[6]
Fermacies of herbes,[6] and eek save[7]
They dronken, for they wolde hir limes[8] have.
For which this noble duk, as he wel can,
Conforteth and honoureth every man,
And made revel al the longe night,
Un-to the straunge lordes, as was right.
Ne ther was holden no disconfitinge,
But as a Iustes[9] or a tourneyinge;[9]
For soothly ther was no disconfiture,
For falling nis nat but an aventure;
Ne to be lad with fors un-to the stake
Unyolden, and with twenty knightes take,

[1] Cut. [2] Quickly. [3] Conscious. [4] Pleased. [5] Pierced. [6] The principal remedies in those times. [7] Sage, a favorite remedy in mediæval days. [8] Some texts have "lives." [9] Jousts, tournaments.

O persone allone, with-outen mo,
And haried[1] forth by arme, foot, and to,
And eek his stede driven forth with staves,
With footmen, bothe yemen and eek knaves,
It nas aretted[2] him no vileinye,[3]
Ther may no man clepen it cowardye.
For which anon duk Theseus leet crye,
To stinten alle rancour and envye,
The gree[4] as wel of o syde as of other,
And either syde y-lyk as otheres brother;
And yaf hem yiftes after hir degree,
And fully heeld a feste dayes three;
And conveyed the kinges worthily
Out of his toun a Iournee[5] largely.
And hoom wente every man the righte way.
Ther was namore, but "far wel, have good day!"
Of this bataille I wol namore endyte,
But speke of Palamon and of Arcite.
Swelleth the brest of Arcite, and the sore
Encresseth at his herte more and more.
The clothered[6] blood, for any lechecraft,[7]
Corrupteth,[8] and is in his bouk[9] y-laft,[10]
That nother veyne-blood,[11] ne ventusinge,[12]
Ne drinke of herbes may ben his helpinge.
The vertu expulsif, or animal,
Fro thilke vertu cleped natural,
Ne may the venim voyden, ne expelle.
The pypes of his longes gonne to swelle,
And every lacerte[13] in his brest adoun
Is shent[14] with venim and corrupcioun.
Him gayneth neither, for to gete his lyf,
Vomyt upward, ne dounward laxatif;

[1] Hurried. [2] Accounted. [3] Dishonor. [4] Prize. [5] A day's journey. [6] Clotted. [7] Surgical skill. [8] Became corrupt. [9] Body. [10] Left. [11] Blood-letting. [12] Cupping. [13] Muscle. [14] Destroyed.

Al is to-brosten thilke regioun,
Nature hath now no dominacioun.
And certeynly, ther nature wol nat wirche,[1]
Fare-wel, phisyk! go ber the man to chirche.[2]
This al and som,[3] that Arcita moot dye,
For which he sendeth after Emelye,
And Palamon, that was his cosin dere;
Than seyde he thus, as ye shul after here.
"Naught may the woful spirit in myn herte
Declare o poynt of alle my sorwes smerte
To yow, my lady, that I love most;
But I biquethe the service of my gost[4]
To yow aboven every creature,
Sin that my lyf ne may no lenger dure.
Allas, the wo! allas, the peynes stronge,
That I for yow have suffred, and so longe!
Allas, the deeth! allas, myn Emelye!
Allas, departing of our compaignye!
Allas, myn hertes quene! allas, my wyf!
Myn hertes lady, endere[5] of my lyf!
What is this world? what asketh men to have?
Now with his love, now in his colde grave
Allone, with-outen any compaignye.
Fare-wel, my swete fo![6] myn Emelye!
And softe tak me in your armes tweye,
For love of God, and herkneth what I seye.
I have heer with my cosin Palamon
Had stryf and rancour, many a day a-gon,
For love of yow, and for my Ielousye.
And Iupiter so wis my soule gye,[7]
To speken of a servant proprely,
With alle circumstaunces trewely,

[1] Work. [2] Cf. Dryden: "Where nature cannot work, the effect of art is void." [3] This is all there is of it. [4] Spirit. [5] Ender. [6] Foe; enemy. [7] So willed to guide my soul.

That is to seyn, trouthe, honour, and knighthede,
Wisdom, humblesse, estaat, and heigh kinrede,
Fredom, and al that longeth to that art,
So Iupiter have of my soule part,
As in this world right now ne knowe I non
So worthy to be loved as Palamon,
That serveth yow, and wol doon al his lyf.
And if that evere ye shul been a wyf,
Foryet nat Palamon, the gentil man."
And with that word his speche faille gan,[1]
For fro his feet up to his brest was come
The cold of deeth, that hadde him overcome.
And yet more-over, in his armes two
The vital strengthe is lost, and al ago.
Only the intellect, with-outen more,
That dwelled in his herte syk and sore,
Gan faillen, when the herte felte deeth,
Dusked[2] his eyen two, and failled breeth.
But on his lady yet caste he his yë;
His laste word was, "mercy, Emelye!"
His spirit chaunged hous, and wente ther,
As I cam nevere, I can nat tellen wher.[3]
Therfor I stinte, I nam no divynistre;
Of soules fynde I nat in this registre,

[1] Cf. Dryden's description of the last moments of Arcite:

"This was his last; for death came on amain,
And exercised below his iron reign;
Then upward to the seat of life he goes:
Sense fled before him, what he touched he froze:
Yet could he not his closing eye withdraw,
Though less and less of Emily he saw:
So, speechless for a little space he lay;
Then grasped the hand he held, and sighed his soul away."

[2] Grew dark or dim.

[3] "The soul of Arcite went where heathens go,
Who better live than we, though less they know" (DRYDEN).

Ne me ne list thilke opiniouns to telle
Of hem, though that they wryten wher they dwelle.
Arcite is cold, ther Mars his soule gye;[1]
Now wol I speken forth of Emelye.
Shrighte[2] Emelye, and howleth Palamon,
And Theseus his suster took anon
Swowninge, and bar hir fro the corps away.
What helpeth it to tarien[3] forth the day,
To tellen how she weep, bothe eve and morwe?
For in swich cas wommen can have swich sorwe,
Whan that hir housbonds been from hem ago,
That for the more part they sorwen so,
Or elles fallen in swich maladye,
That at the laste certeynly they dye.
Infinite been the sorwes and the teres
Of olde folk, and folk of tendre yeres,
In al the toun, for deeth of this Theban,
For him ther wepeth bothe child and man;
So greet a weping was ther noon certayn,
Whan Ector[4] was y-broght, al fresh y-slayn,
To Troye; allas! the pitee that was ther,
Cracching[5] of chekes, rending eek of heer.
"Why woldestow be deed," thise wommen crye,
"And haddest gold ynough, and Emelye?"
No man mighte gladen Theseus,
Savinge his olde fader Egeus,
That knew this worldes transmutacioun,
As he had seen it chaungen up and doun,
Ioye after wo, and wo after gladnesse:[6]
And shewed hem ensamples and lyknesse.

[1] May Mars guide his soul. [2] Shrieks. [3] Tarry. [4] The story of Palamon and Arcite antedates that of Hector, the hero of Troy in the Trojan war, who was slain by the Greek hero Achilles, and dragged thrice round the walls of Troy. [5] Scratching. [6] Cf. Dryden: "Good after ill, and after pain delight."

"Right as ther deyed nevere man," quod he,
"That he ne livede in erthe in som degree,
Right so ther livede nevere man," he seyde,
"In al this world, that som tyme he ne deyde.
This world nis but a thurghfare ful of wo,[1]
And we ben pilgrimes, passinge to and fro;
Deeth is an ende of every worldly sore."
And over al this yet seyde he muchel more
To this effect, ful wysly to enhorte
The peple, that they sholde hem reconforte.
Duk Theseus, with al his bisy cure,[2]
Caste[3] now wher that the sepulture
Of good Arcite may best y-maked be,
And eek most honurable in his degree.
And at the laste he took conclusioun,
That ther as first Arcite and Palamoun
Hadden for love the bataille hem bitwene,
That in that selve[4] grove, swote and grene,
Ther as he hadde his amorous desyres,
His compleynt, and for love his hote fyres,
He wolde make a fyr, in which thoffice[5]
Funeral he mighte al accomplice;
And leet[6] comaunde anon to hakke[7] and hewe
The okes olde, and leye hem on a rewe
In colpons[8] wel arrayed for to brenne;
His officers with swifte feet they renne,
And ryde anon at his comaundement.
And after this, Theseus hath y-sent
After a bere,[9] and it al over-spradde
With cloth of gold, the richest that he hadde.

[1] Cf. Dryden:

"Like pilgrims to the appointed place we tend:
The world's an inn, and death the journey's end."

[2] Care. [3] Considered. [4] Same. [5] This description of the funeral rites is imitated from Statius's Thebaid. [6] Left. [7] Cut. [8] Logs. [9] Bier.

And of the same suyte he cladde Arcite;
Upon his hondes hadde he gloves whyte;
Eek on his heed a coroune of laurer grene,
And in his hond a swerd ful bright and kene.
He leyde him bare the visage[1] on the bere,
Therwith he weep that pitee was to here.
And for the peple sholde seen him alle,
Whan it was day, he broghte him to the halle,
That roreth of the crying and the soun.
Tho cam this woful Theban Palamoun,
With flotery[2] berd, and ruggy[3] asshy heres,
In clothes blake, y-dropped al with teres;
And, passing othere of weping, Emelye,[4]
The rewfulleste[5] of al the compaignye.
In as muche as the service sholde be
The more noble and riche in his degree,
Duk Theseus leet forth three stedes bringe,
That trapped were in steel al gliteringe,
And covered with the armes of daun Arcite.
Up-on thise stedes, that weren grete and white,
Ther seten folk, of which oon bar his sheeld,
Another his spere up in his hondes heeld;
The thridde bar with him his bowe Turkeys,
Of brend[6] gold was the cas, and eek the harneys;
And riden forth a pas with sorweful chere
Toward the grove, as ye shul after here.
The nobleste of the Grekes that ther were
Upon hir shuldres carieden the bere,
With slake[7] pas, and eyen rede and wete,
Thurgh-out the citee, by the maister[8]-strete,
That sprad was al with blak, and wonder hye
Right of the same is al the strete y-wrye.[9]

[1] With his face bare. [2] Floating. [3] Rough; shaggy. [4] And surpassing others in weeping came Emily. [5] Most sorrowful. [6] Burnished. [7] Slow. [8] Main. [9] Covered.

Up-on the right hond wente old Egeus,
And on that other syde duk Theseus,
With vessels in hir hand of gold wel fyn,
Al ful of hony, milk, and blood, and wyn;
Eek Palamon, with ful greet compaignye;
And after that cam woful Emelye,
With fyr in honde, as was that tyme the gyse,[1]
To do thoffice of funeral servyse.
Heigh labour, and ful greet apparaillinge
Was at the service and the fyr-makinge,
That with his grene top the heven raughte,[2]
And twenty fadme[3] of brede[4] the armes straughte;[5]
This is to seyn, the bowes were so brode.
Of stree[6] first ther was leyd ful many a lode.
But how the fyr was maked up on highte,
And eek the names how the treës highte,
As ook, firre, birch, asp, alder, holm, popler,
Wilow, elm, plane, ash, box, chasteyn,[7] lind, laurer,
Mapul, thorn, beech, hasel, ew, whippeltre,[8]
How they weren feld, shal nat be told for me;
Ne how the goddes ronnen up and doun,
Disherited[9] of hir habitacioun,
In which they woneden[10] in reste and pees,
Nymphes, Faunes, and Amadrides;[11]
Ne how the bestes and the briddes alle
Fledden for fere, whan the wode was falle;
Ne how the ground agast was of the light,
That was nat wont to seen the sonne bright;
Ne how the fyr was couched first with stree,
And than with drye stokkes cloven a three,
And than with grene wode and spycerye,
And than with cloth of gold and with perrye,[12]

[1] Custom. [2] Reached. [3] Fathoms. [4] Broad. [5] Stretched. [6] Straw. [7] Chestnut. [8] The cornel tree. [9] Deprived of. [10] Dwelt. [11] Hamadryads, tree nymphs. [12] Jewels; precious stones.

And gerlandes hanging with ful many a flour,
The mirre, thencens, with al so greet odour;
Ne how Arcite lay among al this,
Ne what richesse aboute his body is;
Ne how that Emelye, as was the gyse,
Putte in the fyr of funeral servyse;
Ne how she swowned whan men made the fyr,
Ne what she spak, ne what was hir desyr;
Ne what Ieweles men in the fyr tho caste,
Whan that the fyr was greet and brente faste;
Ne how som caste hir sheeld, and som hir spere,
And of hir vestiments, whiche that they were,
And cuppes ful of wyn, and milk, and blood,
Into the fyr, that brente as it were wood;
Ne how the Grekes with an huge route[1]
Thryës riden al the fyr aboute
Up-on the left hand, with a loud shoutinge,
And thryës with hir speres clateringe;
And thryës how the ladies gonne crye;
Ne how that lad was hom-ward Emelye;
Ne how Arcite is brent to asshen colde;
Ne how that liche-wake was y-holde[2]
Al thilke night, ne how the Grekes pleye
The wake-pleyes,[3] ne kepe I nat to seye;
Who wrastleth best naked, with oille enoynt,
Ne who that bar him best, in no disioynt.[4]
I wol nat tellen eek how that they goon
Hoom til Athenes whan the pley is doon.
But shortly to the poynt than wol I wende,
And maken of my longe tale an ende.

By processe and by lengthe of certeyn yeres
Al stinted is the moorning and the teres

[1] Crowd. [2] How watch was held over the bodies of the dead. [3] The "wake-pleyes" (ceremonies at the vigils for the dead) of Chaucer's time were not altogether like the funeral games of the ancients. [4] Without disadvantage.

Of Grekes, by oon general assent.
Than semed me ther was a parlement
At Athenes, up-on certeyn poynts and cas;
Among the whiche poynts y-spoken was
To have with certeyn contrees alliaunce,
And have fully of Thebans obeisaunce.
For which this noble Theseus anon
Leet senden after gentil Palamon,
Unwist[1] of him what was the cause and why;
But in his blake clothes sorwefully
He cam at his comaundement in hye.
Tho sente Theseus for Emelye.
Whan they were set, and hust[2] was al the place,
And Theseus abiden hadde a space
Er any word cam from his wyse brest,
His eyen sette he ther as was his lest,
And with a sad visage he syked stille,
And after that right thus he seyde his wille.
"The firste moevere of the cause above,
Whan he first made the faire cheyne of love,
Greet was theffect, and heigh was his entente;
Wel wiste he why, and what ther-of he mente;
For with that faire cheyne of love he bond
The fyr, the eyr, the water, and the lond
In certeyn boundes, that they may nat flee;
That same prince and that moevere," quod he,
"Hath stablissed, in this wrecched world adoun,
Certeyne dayes and duracioun
To al that is engendred in this place,
Over the whiche day they may nat pace,[3]
Al mowe they yet tho dayes wel abregge;[4]
Ther needeth non auctoritee allegge,[5]

[1] Unknown. [2] Quiet. [3] Pass. [4] Although they may much shorten those days; cf. Dryden: "Shorten their hours they may, for will is free." [5] To allege.

For it is preved by experience,
But that me list declaren my sentence.[1]
Than may men by this ordre wel discerne,
That thilke moevere stable is and eterne.
Wel may men knowe, but it be a fool,
That every part deryveth from his hool.[2]
For nature hath nat take his biginning
Of no partye ne cantel[3] of a thing,
But of a thing that parfit is and stable,
Descending so, til it be corrumpable.[4]
And therfore of his wyse purveiaunce,
He hath so wel biset his ordinaunce,
That speces[5] of thinges and progressiouns
Shullen endure by successiouns,
And nat eterne be, with-oute lye:
This maistow understonde and seen at eye.[6]
"Lo the ook, that hath so long a norisshinge[7]
Fro tyme that it first biginneth springe,
And hath so long a lyf, as we may see,
Yet at the laste wasted is the tree.
"Considereth eek, how that the harde stoon
Under our feet, on which we trede and goon,
Yit wasteth it, as it lyth by the weye.
The brode river somtyme wexeth dreye.[8]
The grete tounes see we wane and wende.
Than may ye see that al this thing hath ende.
"Of man and womman seen we wel also,
That nedeth in oon of thise termes two,

[1] I wish to declare my opinion. [2] Whole. [3] Fragment. [4] Corruptible. [5] Species; varieties. [6] See at a glance.

[7] "The monarch oak, the patriarch of the trees,
Shoots rising up, and spreads by slow degrees;
Three centuries he grows, and three he stays,
Supreme in state, and in three more decays" (DRYDEN).

[8] "So rivers, rapid once, now naked lie" (DRYDEN).

This is to seyn, in youthe or elles age,
He moot ben deed, the king as shal a page;
Som in his bed, som in the depe see,
Som in the large feeld, as men may se.
Ther helpeth noght, al goth that ilke weye.
Thanne may I seyn that al this thing moot deye.
What maketh this but Iupiter the king?
The which is prince and cause of alle thing,
Converting al un-to his propre welle,
From which it is deryved, sooth to telle.
And here-agayns no creature on lyve
Of no degree availleth for to stryve.
"Thanne is it wisdom, as it thinketh me,
To maken vertu of necessitee,
And take it wel, that we may nat eschue,
And namely that to us alle is due.
And who-so gruccheth[1] ought, he doth folye,
And rebel is to him that al may gye.[2]
And certeinly a man hath most honour
To dyen in his excellence and flour,
Whan he is siker of his gode name;
Than hath he doon his freend, ne him, no shame.
And gladder oghte his freend ben of his deeth,
Whan with honour up-yolden[3] is his breeth,
Than whan his name apalled[4] is for age;
For al forgeten is his vasselage.[5]
Than is it best, as for a worthy fame,
To dyen whan that he is best of name.
The contrarie of al this is wilfulnesse.
Why grucchen we? why have we hevinesse,
That good Arcite, of chivalrye flour
Departed is, with duetee and honour
Out of this foule prison of this lyf?
Why grucchen heer his cosin and his wyf

[1] Grudgeth. [2] Guide. [3] Upyielded. [4] Enfeebled. [5] Valor.

Of his wel-fare that loved hem so wel?
Can he hem thank? nay, God woot, never a del,
That bothe his soule and eek hem-self offende,
And yet they mowe hir lustes nat amende.[1]
"What may I conclude of this longe serye,[2]
But after wo I rede us to be merye,[3]
And thanken Iupiter of al his grace?
And er that we departen from this place,
I rede that we make, of sorwes two,
O parfyt Ioye, lasting evere-mo:
And loketh now wher most sorwe is her-inne,
Ther wol we first amenden and biginne.
"Suster," quod he, "this is my fulle assent,
With al thavys[4] heer of my parlement,
That gentil Palamon, your owene knight,
That serveth yow with wille, herte, and might,
And evere hath doon, sin that ye first him knewe,
That ye shul, of youre grace, up-on him rewe,[5]
And taken him for housbonde and for lord:
Leen[6] me youre hond, for this is our acord.
Lat see now of your wommanly pitee.
He is a kinges brother sone, pardee;
And, though he were a povre bacheler,
Sin he hath served yow so many a yeer,
And had for yow so greet adversitee,
It moste been considered, leveth[7] me;
For gentil mercy oghte to passen right."[8]
Than seyde he thus to Palamon ful right:
"I trowe ther nedeth litel sermoning
To make yow assente to this thing.
Com neer, and tak your lady by the hond."
Bitwixen hem was maad anon the bond,

[1] Cannot amend. [2] Series. [3] I advise that we be merry. [4] The advice. [5] Have pity. [6] Give. [7] Believe. [8] Mercy ought to surpass mere right. Cf. Merchant of Venice, iv. i.: "But mercy is above this sceptered sway."

That highte matrimoine or mariage,
By al the counseil and the baronage.
And thus with alle blisse and melodye
Hath Palamon y-wedded Emelye.
And God, that al this wyde world hath wroght,
Sende him his love, that hath it dere a-boght.
For now is Palamon in alle wele,
Living in blisse, in richesse, and in hele;
And Emelye him loveth so tendrely,
And he hir serveth al-so gentilly,
That nevere was ther no word hem bitwene
Of Ielousye, or any other tene.[1]
Thus endeth Palamon and Emelye;
And God save al this faire compaignye![2]

Here is ended the Knightes Tale.

[1] Vexation. [2] The last ten lines of Dryden's Palamon and Arcite read:

"All of a tenor was their after life,
No day discolored with domestic strife;
No jealousy, but mutual truth believed,
Secure repose, and kindness undeceived.
Thus Heaven, beyond the compass of his thought,
Sent him the blessing he so dearly bought.
So may the Queen of Love long duty bless,
And all true lovers find the same success."

GLOSSARY.[1]

P = Prologue. K = Knightes Tale.

A.

A, one, single: P 24.
A, in, on; cf. *a-night:* K 184; *a-morwe:* P 822; *a-day,* in the day: K 1765; *a Goddes name,* in God's name: P 854; *a-three,* in three: K 2076.
Able, fit, capable, adapted: P 167.
Aboghte (pret. of *abegge* or *abye*), atoned for, suffered for: K 1445; pp., *aboght:* K 2242.
Abood, delay: K 107.
Aboven, above: P 53.
Abregge, to shorten, *abridge:* K 2141.
Abyde, Abyden (pret. *abod, abood;* pp. *abiden*), abide, delay, wait for, await: K 69, 2124.
Accomplice, to accomplish: K 2006.
Accord, Acord, agreement: P 838.
Achat, purchase: P 571.
Achatour, purchaser, caterer: P 568.
Acordaunt, according to, agreeing, suitable: P 37.
Acorde, to agree, suit: P 244, 830; pp. *acorded:* K 356.
Adamant, adamant: K 1132.
Adoun, down, downward, below: P 393; cf. *doun:* K 245.
Adrad, pp., in great dread, afraid: P 605.
Aferd, Afered, in great fear, afraid: P 628, K 660.
Affeccioun, affection, hope: K 300.
Affermed, confirmed: K 1491.
Affyle, to file, polish: P 712.
Agast, terrified, *aghast:* K 1483.
Agaste him, was terrified: K 1566.
Agayn, Ageyn, again, against, toward: P 66, 801.
Agon, Agoon, gone, past: K 418, 924.
Agreved (pp. of *greve,* to grieve), angry: K 1199.
Al, all, whole (cf. *al a*=a whole: P 584); quite, wholly (cf. *al redy, al armed,* etc.); although (cf. *al spcke he, al have I, al be it*): P 71, 76, 297, 734, K 1406. See **Alle.**
Alaunts, a species of dog: K 1290—used for hunting the boar.
Al be, although: P 297.
Alderbest. See **Aller.**
Ale-stake, a horizontal stake projecting from an alehouse to support a sign: P 667.
Algate, always: P 571.
Alighte (pp. *alight*), alighted: P 722, K 125.
Alle (pl. of *al*), all: P 26, 53.
Aller (gen. pl. of *al*), of all. The older forms are *alra, alre, aller,*

[1] This glossary is taken, with modifications, from one prepared by Rev. Richard Morris, LL.D.

later *alder, alther; our aller*, of us all: P 823; *hir aller*, of them all: P 586; *alderbest*, best of all: P 710, etc.

Alliaunce, alliance: K 2115.

Also, as: P 730.

Amblere, a nag: P 469.

Amiddes, amidst, in the middle: K 1151.

Amonges, amongst: P 759.

Amorwe, on the morrow: P 822.

Amounte, to amount to, signify, denote: K 1504.

And = *an*, if: K 356.

Anlas (or **Anelace**), a kind of knife or dagger, usually worn at the girdle: P 357.

Anoint, anointed: P 199.

Anon, Anoon, *in one* (instant), anon: P 32.

Apalled, become weak, feeble: K 2195.

Apayd, pleased, satisfied: K 1010.

Ape, metaphorically, a fool: P 706.

Apothecarie, apothecary: P 425.

Apparailling, preparation: K 2055.

Appetyt, desire, appetite: K 822.

Apyked, trimmed: P 365.

Aqueyntaunce, acquaintance: P 245.

Arest, a support for the spear when couched for the attack: K 1744. It is sometimes written *rest*.

Areste, seizure, custody: K 452.

Areste, to stop (a horse): P 827.

Aretted, ascribed, imputed, deemed: K 1871.

Arm-greet, as thick as a man's arm: K 1287.

Armipotente, mighty in arms: K 1124.

Array, state, situation, dress, equipage: P 41, K 76.

Arrayed, set in order, dressed, adorned, equipped: K 1188.

Arrerage, arrears: P 602.

Ars-metrik, arithmetic: K 1040.

Arwe, arrow: P 104.

Aryve, arrival, or perhaps disembarkation (of troops): P 60.

As, as if: P 636.

Aslake, to moderate, appease: K 902.

As nouthe, As now, at present: P 462, K 1406.

A-sonder, asunder: P 491.

Assaut, assault: K 131.

Assayed, tried: K 953.

Asseged, besieged: K 23.

Asshen, ashes: K 444.

Assoilling, absolution: P 661.

Assuren, to make sure, confirm: K 1066.

Assyse, assize: P 314.

Astat, estate, rank. See **Estat.**

Asterte, to escape: K 737; pp. *astert:* K 734.

Astoned, astonished: K 1503.

Astored, stored: P 609.

Athamaunte, adamant: K 447.

Atrede, to surpass in council, outwit: K 1591.

At-renne, outrun: K 1591.

Atte, at the. Cf. *atte beste*, in the best manner: P 29, 749; *atte laste*, at the last: P 707; *atte fulle* = fully: P 651.

Atteyne, to attain: K 385.

Auctoritee, authority; a text of Scripture, or some respectable writer: K 2142.

Auter, altar: K 1047.

Avaunce, to be of advantage, be profitable: P 246.

Avaunt, boast, *vaunt:* P 227.

Avauntage, advantage: K 435.

Aventure, chance, luck, misfortune, adventure: P 25, 795.

Avow, vow, promise: K 1379.

Avys, advice, consideration, opinion: P 786, K 1010.

Awe, fear, dread: P 654.

Axe, to ask: K 489.

Axing, asking, demand: K 968.

Ay, ever, aye: P 63.

Ayeins, against: K 929.

Ayel, a grandfather: K 1619.

B.

Bacheler, Bachiller, an unmarried man, a *bachelor*, a knight: P 80.

Baillif, bailiff: P 603.

Bake = *baken*, baked: P 343.

Balled, bald: P 198, K 1600

Bane, destruction, death: K 239, 823.

Baner, a banner: K 120, 1552.

Bar, bore, carried: P 105, 158, 558, 618; *baren us*, conducted ourselves: P 721. See **Bere.**

Barbour, a barber: K 1167.
Bare, bare, open: P 683, K 2019.
Bareyn, Bareyne, barren, devoid of: K 386, 1119.
Baronage, an assembly of barons: K 2238.
Barre, bar or bolt of a door: K 217.
Barres, ornaments of a girdle: P 329.
Bataille, battle: P 61, K 130.
Bawdrik, *baudrick*, or *baldrick*, belt, or girdle, worn transversely: P 116.
Be, (1) to be: K 1377; (2) been: P 60.
Bede (pl. *bedes*), a bead: P 159.
Been, (1) to be; (2) are: P 178; (3) been: P 199.
Beggere, a beggar: P 252.
Beggestere, a beggar, properly a female beggar: P 242.
Ben, (1) to be. See **Been**.
Benigne, kind: P 518.
Bent, declivity of a hill, a plain, open field: dat., *bente*: K 1123.
Berd, beard: P 270, K 1272.
Bere, to bear, to carry, to conduct one's self, behave: P 796; to pierce, strike: K 1398; as "to *bere* through" = to pierce through.
Bere, a bier: K 2013.
Bere, a bear: K 782.
Berye, a berry: P 207.
Beste, a beast: K 451, 1118.
Bet, better: P 242.
Bete, (1) to beat; (2) beaten, ornamented. See **Ybete**.
Bete, to kindle, light: K 1395. The literal meaning is to mend, repair.
Bi-bled, covered over with blood: K 1144.
Bifalle, to befall, K 947; pp., befallen: P 795.
Bifel, befell: P 19, K 151.
Bifore, Biforen, before: P 377, 450, K 518.
Bigan, began: P 44, K 690.
Biginne, to begin: P 42.
Bigonne, pp., begun: P 52.
Biholde (pret. *biheld*, pp. *biholde*, *biholden*), to behold: K 443, 1435.
Bihote, promise: K 996.
Bihynde, behind: K 192.
Biknowe, to acknowledge: K 698.
Biloved, beloved: P 215, K 571.
Binne, bin, chest: P 593.
Biquethe, to bequeath: K 1910.
Biraft, bereft: K 503.
Biseken, to beseech: K 60.
Bisette (pret. *bisette*, pp. *biset*), to employ, use, arrange: P 279, K 2154.
Bismotered, spotted, smutted: P 76.
Bisy, busy, industrious, anxious: P 321.
Bisyde, beside, near: P 445.
Bisydes, beside, near: P 402.
Bisynesse, labor, care, anxiety: P 520, K 149.
Bit (3d pers. sing. of *bidden*), bids: P 187.
Bithoght, "am bethoght," have thought of, have called to mind: P 767.
Bitwene, between: K 2247. See **Bitwixe**.
Bitwixe, betwixt: P 277.
Bitwixen, betwixt, between: K 22.
Biwreye, to make known, bewray, betray: K 1371.
Blak (def. form and pl. *blake*), black: P 557, K 41, 1659.
Blankmanger, some compound of capon minced, with cream, sugar, and flour: P 387.
Blede, to bleed: K 943 (pret. *bledde*: P 145, pp. *bled*).
Bleynte, blenched, started back: K 220.
Blis (dat. *blisse*), bliss: K 372.
Blisful, blessed, blissful: P 17, 770.
Blyve, quickly, forthwith: K 1839.
Bocher, a butcher: K 1167.
Bok (pl. *bokes*), a book: P 294.
Bokeler, buckler: P 112, 471.
Bokelinge, buckling: K 1645.
Boket, a bucket: K 675.
Bole, bull; pl. *boles*: K 1281.
Bond (pret. of *binden*), bound: K 2133.
Bone, prayer, petition, *boon*: K 1411.
Boon (pl. *bones*), bone: P. 546, K 319.
Boor (pl. *bores*), boar: K 800.
Boras, borax: P 630.
Bord, table: P 52.
Bore, born: K 684.
Bores. See **Boor**.
Born, conducted: P 87.
Borwe, pledge, security: K 764.

Bote, remedy: P 424. See **Bete.**
Botes, boots: P 203, 273.
Bothe, both: K 973.
Bouk, body: K 1888.
Bowes, boughs: K 2059.
Bracer, guard for the arm: P 111.
Brak (pret. of *breke*), broke: K 610.
Braun (pl. *braunes*), muscle: P 546, K 1277.
Braunche, a branch: K 209.
Brede, breadth: K 1112.
Breed, bread: P 147.
Breem, a fresh-water fish, bream: P 350.
Breeth, breath: P 5.
Breke (pret. *brak, brok*; pp. *broke, ibroken*), to break: P 551. See **Brak.**
Breme, fiercely, furiously: K 841.
Brend, burnished, bright: K 1304.
Brende (pp. *brend, brent*), burnt: K 1567.
Brenne, to burn: K 1473.
Brenning, burning: K 138, 1142.
Brenningly, fiercely, ardently: K 706.
Brent, burnt: K 1159.
Breres, briers: K 674.
Brest, bursteth: K 1752.
Brest, breast: P 115, 131.
Bresten (pret. *brast*, pp. *borsten, bursten*), to burst: K 1122; hence *to-breste*, break in two: K 1753.
Brest-plat, breastplate: K 1262.
Bretful, brimful: P 687, K 1306.
Bretherhed, brotherhood, brothers of a religious order: P 511.
Brimstoon, brimstone: P 629.
Bristles, bristles: P 556.
Broche, a brooch: P 160.
Brode, broad: K 2166.
Brode, broadly, plainly: P 739.
Broke, broken. See **Breke.**
Brond, firebrand, burning log: K 1481.
Brood (def. form *brode*), broad: P 155, 471, 549.
Broun, brown: P 109.
Browding, embroidery: K 1640.
Broyded, braided, woven: K 191.
Bulte, built: K 690.
Burdoun, burden (of a song), a musical accompaniment: P 673.
Burgeys, citizen, burgess: P 369.
Burned, burnished: K 1125.
But, unless: P 582.
By and by, separately: K 153.
By-cause, because: P 174.
Byde, abide, remain: K 718.
By-iaped, deceived, befooled: K 727.
Bying, buying: P 569.

C.

Caas, case, condition, hap: P 585; pl. cases (of law): P 323.
Cacche (pret. *caughte*), to catch: P 498.
Caitif, wretched, a wretch: K 66, 694, 859.
Cam, came: P 547.
Can, (1) know, knows: P 210, K 922; (2) acknowledge, as in the phrase "can thank:" K 950.
Cantel, corner, cantle: K 2150.
Cappe, a cap, hood: P 586.
Care, sorrow, grief: K 463.
Careyne, carcass: K 1155.
Carf (the pret. of *kerve*, to cut, *carve*), carved: P 100.
Carl, a churl: P 545.
Carol, a round dance: K 1073.
Carpe, to talk, discourse: P 474.
Carte, chariot, cart: K 1164.
Carter, charioteer: K 1164.
Cas, case, condition, hap, chance: P 844, K 216.
Cas, case, quiver: K 1500.
Cast, device, plot: K 1610.
Caste, Casten, to plan, devise, consider, suppose: K 1314, 1996.
Catel, wealth, goods, valuable property of any kind, *chattels*: P 373, 540.
Caughte, took: P 498. See **Cacche.**
Caytyves, pl. of *Caitif.*
Ceint, cincture, girdle: P 329.
Celle, a religious house: P 172; cell: K 518.
Cercles, circles: K 1273.
Cerial, belonging to the species of oak called *Cerrus*: K 1432.
Certein, Certeyn, Certes, certain, certainly, indeed: P 375, 451, K 17.
Certeinly, Certeynly, certainly: P 204.
Ceruce, white lead: P 630.

Champartye, a share of land, a partnership in power: K 1091.
Champioun, a champion: P 239.
Chapeleyne, a chaplain: P 164.
Chapman, a merchant: P 397.
Char, car, chariot: K 1280.
Charge, harm: K 426, 1429.
Chasteyn, a chestnut tree: K 2064.
Chaunce, chance, hap: K 894.
Chaungen, to change: P 348.
Chaunterie, an endowment for the payment of a priest to sing mass agreeably to the appointment of the founder: P 510.
Chees. See **Chese.**
Chere, countenance, appearance, entertainment, cheer: P 139, 728, K 55.
Cherl, churl: K 1601.
Chese, to choose; *chees*, imper. sing. choose: K 737, 756.
Cheventein, a chieftain, captain: K 1697. See **Chieftayn.**
Chevisaunce, gain, profit; also an agreement for borrowing money: P 282.
Cheyne, a chain: K 2130.
Chief, chief: K 199.
Chieftayn, a leader, chief: K 1697.
Chikne, a chicken: P 380.
Chirking, shrieking: K 1146.
Chivachye, a military expedition: P 85.
Chivalrye, knighthood, the manners, exercises, and valiant exploits of a knight: P 45, K 7, 20.
Cite, Citee, a city: K 81.
Citole, a kind of musical instrument with chords: K 1101.
Clarioun, clarion: K 1653.
Clarree, wine mixed with honey and spices, and afterwards strained till it was *clear*: K 613. It was called also *Piment.*
Clasped, Clapsed, clasped: P 273.
Clatere, to clatter: K 1501.
Cleer, clear: K 204.
Clene, clean, pure, cleanly: P 133.
Clennesse, cleanness, purity (of life): P 506.
Clense, to cleanse: P 631.
Cleped, called: K 930.
Clepen, to call, cry, say: P 121, 620, 643.
Clere, clearly: P 170.
Clerk, a man of learning, a student at the University: P 285.
Cloistre, a cloister: P 181.
Cloke, a cloak: P 157.
Clothered = *clottred*, clotted: K 1887.
Cofre, coffer, chest: P 298.
Col-blak, coal-black, black as a coal: K 1284.
Cole, coal: K 1834.
Colers of, (having) collars of: K 1294.
Com (pret. *came*, imp. *come*), come: P 672, K 321.
Comaundement, commandment, command: K 2011.
Comen, come: P 671, K 497.
Commune, common. *As in commune* = as in common, commonly: K 393.
Communes, commoners, common people: K 1651.
Compaignye, Compainye, company: P 24.
Compas, circle: K 1031.
Compassing, craft, contrivance: K 1138.
Compeer, gossip, a near friend: P 670.
Compleyne, to complain: K 50.
Compleynt, complaint: K 2004.
Composicioun, agreement: P 848.
Condicioun, condition: P 38.
Confort, comfort: P 773, 776.
Confus, confused, confounded: K 1372.
Conne, know, be able. See **Can.**
Conscience, feeling, pity: P 150.
Conseil, counsel: K 283, 289.
Conserve, to preserve: K 1471.
Contek, contest: K 1145.
Contenaunce, countenance: K 1058.
Contrarie, an opponent, adversary, foe: K 1001.
Contree, country: P 216, K 355.
Cop, top of anything: P 554.
Cope, a cloak, cape: P 260.
Coppe, cup: P 134.
Corage, heart, spirit, courage: P 11, 22.
Coroune, a crown: K 2017.
Corrumpable, corruptible: K 2152.
Corrumpe, to corrupt: K 888.
Corven (pp. of *kerve*), cut: K 1838.

Cosin, a cousin, kinsman: K 273.
Cote, coat: P 103, 612.
Cote-armure, a coat worn over armor, upon which the armorial ensigns of the wearer were usually embroidered: K 158, 1282.
Couched, (1) laid; (2) inlaid, trimmed: K 1303, 2075.
Coude, (1) could: P 236, 326; (2) knew: P 467; knew how: P 95, 106. See **Can**.
Counseil, counsel, advice: P 784, K 283.
Countour: P 359.
Countrefete, counterfeit, imitate: P 139.
Cours, course: P 8, K 836.
Courtepy, a sort of upper coat of a coarse material: P 290.
Couthe, well known: P 14.
Coverchief, kerchief: P 453.
Covyne, *covin*, deceit: P 604.
Cowardye, cowardice: K 1872.
Coy, quiet: P 119.
Cracching, scratching: K 1976.
Crafty, skillful (cf. *craftsman*): K 1039.
Crispe, crisp, curled: K 1307.
Croppe (pl. *croppes*), top, shoot: P 7, K 674.
Croys, cross: P 699.
Crulle, curly, curled: P 81.
Crydestow = criedst thou: K 225.
Cryen (pret. *cride*, *cryde*), to cry: K 91.
Cryke, creek: P 409.
Culpons, Colpons, shreds, bunches, bundles, logs: P 679, K 2009.
Curat, a curate: P 219.
Cure, care, anxiety: P 303, K 1995.
Curious, careful: P 577.
Curs, curse: P 655.
Curteisye, courtesy: P 46, 132.
Curteys, courteous: P 99, 250.
Cut, lot: P 835.

D.

Daliaunce, gossip: P 211.
Dampned, condemned, doomed: K 317.
Dan, Daun, Lord, was a title commonly given to monks: K 521. It is also prefixed to the names of persons of all sorts, e.g., *Dan Arcyte*, *Dan Burnel*, etc.
Dar (1st pers. sing. present tense), dare: K 293.
Darreyne, to contest, fight out, decide by battle, *darraign*: K 751, 773.
Darst (2d pers. sing.), dare: K 282.
Daun: see **Dan**.
Daunce, Daunse, to dance, a dance: K 1343, 1344. "The olde daunce" = the old game: P 476.
Daunger, a dangerous situation: P 402; liability: K 991. *In daunger* = in his jurisdiction, under his control: P 663.
Daungerous, difficult, sparing: P 517.
Daunsinge, dancing: K 1343.
Dawen (3d sing. *dawth*), to dawn: K 818.
Dayerye, dairy: P 597.
Dayesye, a daisy: P 332. Chaucer defines *daisy* as *the eye of the day*, i.e., day's eye.
Debonaire, kind, gracious: K 1424.
Dede, a deed: P 742.
Deduyt, pleasure, delight: K 1319.
Deed (pl. *dede*), dead: P 145, K 84, 147.
Deedly, deadly, deathlike: K 55, 224.
Deef, deaf: P 446.
Deeth, death: P 605, K 276.
Degree, (1) a step: K 1032; (2) rank or station in life: P 40, K 572, 576.
Del, part, portion, whit: K 967, 1233. *Never a del* = never a whit; *somdel*, somewhat.
Delen, to have dealings with: P 247.
Delivere, quick, active, nimble: P 84.
Delve (pret. *delf*, *dalf*, pp. *dolven*), to dig: P 536.
Delyt, delight, pleasure: P 335, K 821.
Deme, to judge, decide, *doom*, suppose, *deem*: K 1023.
Departe, to part, separate, divide: K 276.
Departing, separation: K 1916.
Depe, deeply: K 1782.
Depeynted, painted, depicted: K 1169, 1173.

Dere, dear, dearly: K 376, 2242.
Dere, to hurt, injure: K 964.
Derk, Derke, dark: K 1137.
Derknesse, darkness: K 593.
Derre, dearer: K 590.
Desdeyn, disdain: P 789.
Desiring, desire: K 1064.
Despitous, angry to excess, cruel, merciless: P 516, K 738.
Despyt, malicious anger, vexation: K 83.
Destreyne, to vex, constrain: K 597.
Destroye, to destroy: K 472.
Desyr, desire: K 385.
Deth. See **Deeth.**
Dette, a debt: P 280.
Dettelees, free from debt: P 582.
Devoir, duty: K 1740.
Devys, opinion, decision, direction: P 816.
Devyse, (1) to direct, order; (2) to relate, describe: P 34, K 136, 190.
Devysing, a putting in order, preparation: K 1638.
Deyen. See **Dyen.**
Deyntee, a dainty, rarity; rare, dainty: P 168.
Deys, dais, platform, the high table: P 370, K 1342.
Diapred, variegated, diversified with flourishes or sundry figures: K 1300.
Diched, diked: K 1030.
Dide (pret. of *don*), did: K 891.
Diete, diet, daily food: P 435.
Digestible, easy to be digested: P 437.
Dight, dressed: K 183.
Digne, (1) worthy: P 141; (2) proud, disdainful: P 517.
Dim, dull, indistinct: K 1575.
Dischevele, with hair hanging loose: P 683.
Disconfiture, Disconfitinge, defeat: K 150, 1861.
Disconfort, discomfort, misery: K 1152.
Disconforten, to dishearten: K 1846.
Discrecioun, discretion: K 921.
Disherited, disinherited: K 2068.
Disioynt, a difficult situation, failure: K 2104.
Dispence, expense, expenditure: P 441, K 1024.
Dispitously, angrily, cruelly: K 266.
Disport, sport, diversion: P 137, 775.
Disposicioun, control, guidance: K 229.
Divisioun, distinction: K 922.
Divyninge, guessing, conjecture: K 1663.
Divynistre, a divine: K 1953.
Dokked, cut short: P 590.
Dome, doom, decision, judgment, opinion: P 323.
Dominacioun, power, control: K 1900.
Don, Doon, Do (pret. *dide, dede*, pp. *do, don, doon*), to do, cause, make, take: P 78, 268, 768, K 84, 1047.
Dong, dung: P 530.
Dore, a door: P 550.
Dorste, dared: P 227.
Doseyn, a dozen: P 578.
Doumb, dumb: P 774.
Doun, down: K 245.
Doute, doubt, fear: P 487, K 283. *Out of doute* = without doubt, doubtless.
Douteles, doubtless, without doubt: K 973.
Dowves, doves: K 1104.
Dragges, drugs: P 426.
Drawe, to draw, or to carry: K 1689.
Drede, to fear, dread: P 660. *To drede*, to be feared.
Dredful, cautious, timid: K 621.
Drenching, drowning: K 1598.
Dresse, to set in order: P 106, K 1736.
Dreye, dry: K 2166.
Drogges, drugs: P 426.
Dronken, drunk: P 135, 637.
Dronken, drunk: P 820.
Drope, a drop: P 131.
Drouped, drooped: P 107.
Drugge, to *drudge*, to do laborious work: K 558.
Duk, a leader, duke: K 2.
Dure, to endure, last: K 1912.
Durste, dared: P 454.
Dusked, grew dark or dim: K 1948.
Dwelle, to tarry: K 803.
Dwelled, dwelt: K 370.
Dyamaunts, diamonds: K 1289.
Dyen, to die: K 251.
Dyere, a dyer: P 362.

Dyete. See **Diete.**
Dyke, to make *dikes* or *ditches:* P 536.
Dys, dice: K 380.

E.

Ecclesiaste, an ecclesiastical person: P 708.
Ech, Eche, each: P 39. 359.
Echon, Echoon, each one: P 820.
Eek, also, moreover, *eke:* P 5, 41.
Eet, ate, did eat: *ete* (imper.), eat: K 1190.
Eft, again: K 811.
Eir, air: K 388.
Elde, age, old age: K 1589, 1590.
Elles, else: P 375.
Embrouded, embroidered: P 89.
Emforth, to the extent of, even with: K 1377.
Empoysoning, poisoning: K 1602.
Empryse, an undertaking, enterprise: K 1682.
Encens, incense: K 1571.
Encombred, (1) wearied, tired: K 860; (2) troubled, in danger: P 508. It is sometimes written *acombred.*
Encres, increase: K 1326.
Encresen, to increase: K 457.
Endelong, lengthways, along: K 1133, 1820.
Endere, one who causes the death of another: K 1918.
Endyte, to dictate, relate: P 95, K 522.
Engendred, produced: P 4.
Enhauncen, to raise: K 576.
Enhorte, to encourage: K 1993.
Enoynt, anointed: K 2103.
Ensample, example: P 496.
Entente, intention, purpose: K 142.
Entuned, intoned: P 123.
Envyned, stored with wine: P 342.
Er, ere, before: K 182, 297.
Erchedeknes, archdeacon's: P 658.
Ere, to plow. *ear:* K 28.
Eres, ears: P 556, K 664.
Erly, early: P 33, 809.
Ernest, earnest: K 267, 268.
Erst than, for *er than,* before that: K 708. *Er* = before; *erst* = first: P 776.
Erthe, earth: K 388.
Eschaunge, exchange: P 278.
Eschue, to avoid, shun: K 2185.
Ese, pleasure, amusement, ease: P 768.
Esed, entertained, accommodated: P 29.
Esen, to entertain: K 1336.
Esily, easily: P 469.
Espye, to see, discover: K 254, 562.
Est, east: K 1743; *estward:* K 1035.
Estat, estate, state, condition: P 203, 522.
Estatlich, Estatly, stately, dignified: P 140, 281.
Estres, the inward parts of a building: K 1113.
Esy, easy: P 223; moderate: P 441.
Eterne, eternal: K 251, 1132.
Evel, evil.
Evele, badly: K 269.
Everich, every: P 241; every one: P 371, K 1269.
Everich a, every, each: P 733.
Everichon, every one: P 31, 747.
Ew, a yew tree: K 2065.
Eyen, eyes: P 152, 267.
Eyle, to ail: K 223.

F.

Fader, father: P 100; gen. sing. *fader:* P 781.
Fadme, fathoms: K 2058.
Faire, beautiful, fair, good; adv., gracefully, well, neatly: P 94, 124, 234, 273.
Fairnesse, (1) beauty: K 240; (2) honesty of life: P 519.
Falding, a sort of coarse cloth: P 391.
Falle, befall: P 585.
Fals, false: K 295.
Falwe, pale: K 506.
Famulier, familiar, homely: P 215.
Fare, proceeding, affair: K 951.
Fare, Faren (pp., *faren, fare,* pl. pres. *faren*), to go, proceed: K 403, 407, 537, 1578.
Farsed, stuffed: P 233.
Faste, near: K 618, 830.
Faught (also *faght*), fought: P 399.
Fayn, glad, gladly: P 766.
Fedde, fed: P 146.
Fee, money, reward: K 945.
Feeld, a field: K 28.

Fel (voc. *felle*), cruel, fierce: K 701, 1772.
Felawe, a fellow: P 650.
Felawshipe, fellowship: P 32.
Feld, felled, cut down: K 2066.
Felle. See **Fel.**
Felonye, crime, disgraceful conduct: K 1138.
Fer, far: P 388, 491, K 992. Comp. *ferre*: K 1202; superl. *ferrest*: P 494.
Ferde, (1) went, proceeded; (2) acted: K 154; pl. *ferden*: K 789.
Fere, fear, terror, alarm: K 475, 1486.
Ferforthly, far forth: K 102.
Fermacie, a medicine, pharmacy: K 1855.
Ferne, distant: P 14.
Ferre, Ferrer, farther, more distant: P 48, 835.
Ferther, further: P 36.
Ferthing, farthing, fourth part; hence a very small portion of anything: P 134, 255.
Feste, a feast: K 25.
Feste, to feast: K 1335.
Festne, to fasten: P 195.
Fet, fetched, brought: P 819, K 1669.
Fether, a feather: P 107.
Fetis, neat, well-made: P 157.
Fetisly, neatly, properly: P 124.
Fettres, fetters (for the *feet* and legs): K 421.
Fey, faith: K 268.
Feyne, to feign: P 705, 736.
Fiers, fierce: K 740, 1087.
Fil (pret. of *fallen*), fell: P 845; *fillen*, pl.: K 91; *fille*, might fall: P 131.
Fithele, fiddle: P 296.
Flee, to flee, flee from: K 312.
Flesh, flesh, meat: P 147.
Flete, to float, swim: K 1539.
Fleting, floating: K 1098.
Flex, flax: P 676.
Flikeringe, fluttering: K 1104.
Flotery, wavy, flowing, floating: K 2025.
Flour, flower: P 4, K 124.
Floytinge, playing on a flute: P 91.
Folk, people: P 25.
Folwe, to follow: K 1509.
Fomy, foamy, foaming: K 1648.
Foo, Fo, foe, enemy: P 63.
Foom, foam: K 801.
For, (1) because: P 443; (2) "*for al*," notwithstanding: K 1162.
For, for fear of, against: P 276.
Forbere, to forbear: K 27.
For-blak, very black: K 1286.
Fordo, pp., ruined, destroyed: K 702.
Forgete (pp. *forgeten, foryeten*), to forget: K 1163, 2196.
Forheed, forehead: P 154.
Forneys, furnace: P 202.
For-old, very old: K 1284.
For-pyned, wasted away (through *pine* or torment), tormented: P 205.
Fors, force: K 1865.
Forster, a forester: P 117.
Forthermoor, furthermore: K 1211.
Forthren, to further, aid: K 279.
Forthy, therefore: K 983.
Fortunen, to make fortunate, to give good or bad fortune: P 417, K 1519.
Forward, covenant, agreement: P 33, 829.
Foryete, forget: K 1024. See **Forgete.**
Foryeve, to forgive: P 743, K 960.
Fother, a load, properly a carriage load: P 530, K 1050.
Foughte, pl. pret., fought: K 320.
Foughten, pp., fought: P 62.
Founden, pp., found: K 754.
Foundre, to founder, fall down: K 1829.
Fowl, Fowel, a bird, *fowl*: P 9, 190, K 1579.
Foyne, Foynen, to make a pass in fencing, to push, thrust: K 796, 1692.
Fraknes, freckles: K 1311.
Fredom, freedom, liberality: P 46.
Freend, Frend, a friend: P 299, K 610.
Frendly, Frendlich, friendly: K 794, 1822.
Frendschipe, friendship: P 428.
Frere, a friar: P 208.
Fresh, fresh: P 365, K 1318.
Freten (pp. *freten*), to eat: K 1161.
Fro, from: P 324.
Frothen, to froth, foam: K 801.
Fulfild, filled full: K 82.
Fyled, cut, filed smooth: K 1294.
Fyn, fine: K 614.

Fynde, to invent, provide: P 736.
Fyr, fire: K 2084, 2093.
Fyr-reed, red as fire: P 624.
Fyry, fiery: K 706.

G.

Gadre, to gather: P 824.
Galingale, sweet cyperus: P 381.
Game, pleasure, sport: K 948.
Gamed, verb. impers., pleased: P 534.
Gan, used as a mood auxiliary, e.g., *gan espye* = did see: K 254; began: K 682.
Gaping, having the mouth wide open, gaping: K 1150.
Gappe, gap: K 781.
Garleek, garlick: P 634.
Gaste, to terrify. See **Agast.**
Gastly, horrible: K 1126. See **Agast.**
Gat, got, obtained: P 703, 704.
Gat-tothed, having teeth far apart: P 468.
Gaude grene, a light green color: K 1221.
Gayler, a jailer: K 206.
Gayne, to avail: K 318.
Gentil, noble: P 72.
Gere, manner, habit: K 514, 673.
Gere, gear, all sorts of instruments, tools, utensils, armor, apparel, fashion: P 352, K 158, 1322.
Gerful, changeable: K 680.
Gerland, a garland: K 196.
Gerner, a garner: P 593.
Gery, changeable: K 678.
Gesse, to deem, suppose, think, *guess*: P 82, 118.
Gete (pp. *geten*), to get, obtain: P 291.
Gigginge, fitting or providing with straps: K 1646.
Gilt, guilt: K 907.
Giltelees, free from guilt, guiltless: K 454.
Ginglen, to jingle: P 170.
Gipoun, a short cassock: P 75, K 1262.
Gipser, a pouch or purse: P 357.
Girdel, girdle: P 358.
Girles, young people, whether male or female: P 664.
Girt, girded, girt: P 329.
Girt, pierced: K 152.
Gladdere, more glad: K 2193.
Gladen, to console, gladden: K 1979.
Gladere, one who makes glad: K 1365.
Glaring, staring (like the eyes of the hare): P 684.
Glede, a live coal, *gleed*: K 1139.
Gliteren, to glitter, shine: K 2032.
Gloweden (pl. pret.), glowed, shone: K 1274.
Go, Gon, Goo, Goon (pp. *go, gon, goon*), to go, walk: P 450, 771.
Gobet, piece, morsel, fragment: P 696.
Godhede, Godhead, divinity: K 1523.
Golde, or **Gulde**, a flower commonly called a *turnsol*, a marigold: K 1071.
Goliardeys, a buffoon: P 560.
Gonne (pl. of *gan*), began, did: K 800.
Good, property, goods: P 581.
Goon, to go: P 12, 377 (pl.), go: P 771.
Goost, ghost, spirit: P 205.
Goot, a goat: P 688.
Goth, goes: K 213, 598.
Goune, a gown: P 93.
Governaunce, management, control, management of affairs, business matters: P 281, K 455. Also, self-control, virtuous conduct.
Governing, control: P 599.
Graunte, grant, permission: K 448.
Graunte, to grant, consent to: P 786.
Graunting, consent, grant: K 1581.
Grece, grease: P 135.
Gree, the prize, superiority: K 1875.
Greet, Gret (def. form and pl. *greete, grete*), great (comp. *gretter*, superl. *gretteste*): P 84, 120, 137, 197, K 5, 218, 1271.
Grene, green: P 103.
Greve, a grove: K 637. This form is used by some of the Elizabethan poets.
Greveth (pres. of *greve*), grieves: K 59.
Greyn, grain: P 596.
Griffoun, a griffin: K 1275.
Grim, fierce: K 1601.
Grisly, horrible, dreadful: K 505.

Grope, to try, test: P 644.
Groyning, grumbling, murmuring, discontent: K 1602.
Grucchen, to murmur, grumble, *grudge:* K 2187.
Gruf, with face flat to the ground: K 91.
Grys, fur of the gray squirrel or rabbit: P 194.
Gulty, guilty: P 660.
Gye, to guide: K 1092.
Gyle, deceit: K 1738.
Gyse, guise, fashion, mode, *wise:* P 663, K 135, 350.

H.

Haberdassher, a seller of hats: P 361.
Habergeoun, a diminutive *hauberk*, a small coat of mail: P 76, K 1261.
Hade = had: P 554.
Hakke, to hack: K 2007.
Halwes, saints: P 14.
Hamer, a hammer: K 1650.
Han = *haven*, to have: P 224.
Happe, to happen, befall: P 585.
Hardily, certainly: P 156.
Hardinesse, boldness: K 1090.
Haried, harried, taken as a prisoner: K 1868.
Harlot: P 647. This term was not confined to females, nor even to persons of bad character. It signifies (1) a young person; (2) a person of low birth; (3) a person given to low conduct; (4) a ribald.
Harlotryes, ribaldries: P 561.
Harneised, equipped: P 114.
Harneys, armor, gear, furniture, *harness:* K 148, 755.
Harre, a hinge: P 550.
Hauberk, a coat of mail: K 1573.
Haunt, (1) an abode, (2) custom, practice, skill: P 447.
Heed, Hede, head: P 198, 455.
Heeld, held: P 337.
Heep, heap, assembly, host, crowd: P 575.
Heer, here: K 933.
Heer, hair: P 589, K 1285.
Heeth, a heath: P 6, 606.
Heigh, high: K 207; great: K 940.
Hele, health: K 413.
Helpe, help: P 260.
Helpen of (pret. *halp*, pp. *holpen*), to help off, get rid of: P 632.
Hem, them: P 18.
Hemself, themselves: K 396.
Heng (pret. of *honge*), hanged: P 160, 358; pl. *henge:* P 677.
Henne, hence: K 1498.
Hente, Henten, seize, take hold of, get, acquire: P 299, 698: K 46 (pret. *hente:* K 442; pp. *hent:* K 723.)
Heraud, a herald: K 159, 1675.
Herberwe, lodging, inn, harbor: P 403, 765.
Herd, haired: K 1660.
Herde, a herd, keeper of cattle, a shep*herd:* P 663.
Here, to hear: P 169.
Heres, hairs: P 555.
Herknen, to hark, hearken, listen: K 668, 985, 1674.
Herneys, armor: K 1638; pl. sets of armor: K 772.
Hert, a hart: K 831.
Herte, heart: P 150.
Hertely, heartily: P 762.
Herte-spoon: K 1748.
Hete, to promise: K 1540.
Hethen, a heathen: P 66.
Hethenesse, the country inhabited by the heathens: P 49; in contradistinction to *Christendom*.
Heve, to heave, raise: P 550. *Heve of* = to lift off (pret. *haf*, *hof:* Eng. *hove*).
Hevenly, heavenly: K 197.
Hewe, color, complexion: K 506.
Hewen, to cut: K 564.
Hewes, colors for painting: K 1230.
Hider, hither: P 672.
Hidous, hideous: K 1120.
Hidously, hideously, dreadfully: K 843.
Highte, was called: P 616, 719, K 333, 1614; to be called: K 699.
Highte. "*On highte*" = aloud: K 926.
Himselve, Himselven, dat. and acc. of *himself:* P 184, 528.
Hindreste, hindmost: P 622.
Hipes, hips: P 472.
Hir, her: P 120.

Hir, their, of them: P 11, K 320. *Hir aller* = of them all: P 586.
Hit, it: P 345.
Ho, an interjection commanding a cessation of anything: K 848, 1675.
Holde, Holden, beholden: K 449; esteemed, held: P 141, K 832, 1861.
Holpen, helped: P 18.
Holt, a wood, grove: P 6.
Holwe, hollow: P 289.
Homward, homeward: K 2098.
Hond, hand: P 193.
Honest, creditable, honorable, becoming: P 246.
Honge (pret. *heng*), to hang: K 1552.
Hool, Hole, whole: P 533, K 2148.
Hoolly, wholly: P 599.
Hoom, home: P 400, K 1881.
Hoomly, homely: P 328.
Hoppesteres (applied to ships), dancing: K 1159. *-ster* is a termination marking the feminine gender, as in modern Eng. *spinster*.
Hors, horse: P 168. Pl. *hors*, horses: P 74, 598, K 1634.
Hoste, host: P 751.
Hostelrye, an hotel, inn: P 23, 722.
Hostiler, innkeeper: P 241.
Hote, hot, hotly: P 97, 394.
Hous, house: P 343.
Housholdere, householder: P 339.
Humblesse, humility: K 923.
Hunte, a hunter: K 820, 1160.
Hunten, to hunt: K 782. *On hunting* = a-hunting: K 829.
Hunteresse, a female hunter: K 1489.
Hurtle, to push: K 1758.
Hust, hushed: K 2123.
Hye, Hyghe, high, highly: K 39, 1217, 1605.
Hye, haste: K 2121; to hasten: K 1416. *In hye* = in haste, hastily.
Hyer, upper: P 398.
Hyne, hind, servant: P 603.

I (vowel).

Ilke, same: P 64, 175.
Imagining, plotting: K 1137.
In, Inne, house, lodging, inn: K 1579.
Inequal, unequal: K 1413.
Infect, invalid: P 320.
Inne, adv., in: P 41, K 760.
Inned, lodged, entertained: K 1334.
Inspired, quickened: P 6.

I (consonant).

(*J* was formerly denoted by *i*, especially by a capital *I*.)
Ialous, jealous: K 471.
Ianglere, a prater, babbler: P 560.
Iape, a trick, jest: P 705.
Iape, to befool, deceive: K 871.
Iet, fashion, mode: P 682.
Iolitee, joyfulness, amusement: P 680, K 949.
Iournee, a day's journey: K 1880.
Iuge, a judge: P 814, K 854.
Iugement, judgment: P 778.
Iuste, Iusten, to joust, tilt, engage in a tournament: P 99, K 1628.
Iustes = *jouste*, a tournament: K 1862.
Iuwyse, judgment: K 881.

K.

Keep, care, attention, heed. *Take keep* = take care: P 398, 503, K 531.
Kembd (pp. of *kembe*), combed, neatly trimmed: K 1285.
Kempe, shaggy: K 1276.
Kene, sharp: P 104.
Kepe (pret. *kepte*, pp. *kept*), to guard, preserve, take care (as in *I kepe nat* = I care not): P 276, K 1380.
Kervere, a carver: K 1041.
Kerving, cutting, carving: K 1057.
Kindled, lighted: K 1437.
Kinrede, kindred: K 428.
Knarre, a knotted, thick-set fellow: P 549.
Knarry, full of *gnarrs* or knots: K 1119.
Knave, a boy, a servant: K 1870.
Knighthede, knighthood: K 1931.
Knobbe, a large pimple: P 633.
Knowe, pp., known: K 345, 1442.
Knyf, a knife: K 1141.
Kynd, Kynde, nature: K 1593.

L.

Lacerte, a fleshy muscle: K 1895.
Lacing, lacing, fastening: K 1646.

Lad, pp., led, carried: K 1762.
Ladde, pret., led, carried: K 588.
Lafte, pret. sing., left, ceased: P 492. Cf. the phrase "*left* off."
Lakke, to lack, be wanting: K 1422.
Langage, language: P 211.
Large, adj., free; adv., largely. Chaucer says, "*at his large:*" K 425, where we should say "*at large.*"
Las, a lace, belt: K 1093; net, snare: K 959.
Lasse, less: K 898.
Lat, imper., let: P 188; *lat be*, cease.
Late, lately, recently. "*Late y-come;*" "*late y-shave:*" P 77, 690.
Latoun, a kind of brass, or tinned iron, *latten:* P 699.
Launde, a plain surrounded by trees, hunting grounds: K 833.
Laurer, a laurel: K 169.
Laxatif, Laxatyf, a purging medicine, looseness: K 2756.
Laynere, a lanner or whiplash: K 1646.
Lazar, a leper: P 242, 245.
Lechecraft, the skill of a physician: K 1887.
Leed, a caldron, copper: P 202.
Leef (pl. *leves*), leaf: K 980.
Leef, dear, beloved, pleasing: K 278, 979.
Leen, give (lit. lend): K 2224.
Leep, leaped: K 1829.
Leet, pret., let: P 128, 508, K 348.
Lene, to lend, give: P 611.
Lene, lean, poor: P 287, 591.
Lenger, longer: P 330, 821.
Lepart, a leopard: K 1328.
Lerne, to learn: P 308.
Lese, to lose: K 357, 432.
Lesing, loss: K 849.
Lesinges, leasing, lies: K 1069.
Lest, pleasure, delight, joy: P 132.
Lest, Leste, least: K 263.
Leste, pret. of vb. impers., pleased: P 750. "Me *list*" = it pleases me; "him *liste*" = it pleased him; "hem *liste*" = it pleased them; "us *leste*" = it pleased us.
Lete, to leave: K 477. See **Leet**.
Lette (pret. *lette*), to hinder, delay, tarry, put off: K 31, 1034. "*Letten of*" = refrain from: K 459.
Lette, delay, hindrance. See previous word.
Letuaries, electuaries: P 426.
Leve, to believe: K 2230.
Leve, leave: K 756.
Levere, rather (comp. of *leef*): P 293. "Him was *levere*" = it was more agreeable to him, he would rather.
Lewed, Lewd, ignorant, unlearned. *Lewed man*, a layman: P 502.
Leye (imp. *ley*, pret. *leyde*, pp. *leyd*), to lay: P 81, 841.
Leyser, leisure: K 330.
Licenciat, one licensed by the pope to hear confessions in all places, and to administer penance independently of the local ordinaries: P 220.
Liche-wake, the vigil, *watch*, or *wake* held over the body of the dead: K 2100.
Licour, liquor, sap: P 3.
Ligge, to lie: K 1347.
Lightly, (1) easily, (2) joyfully: K 1012.
Like, vb. impers., to please: P 777.
Limes, limbs: K 1277.
Limitour, a friar licensed to ask alms within a certain limit: P 209.
Linage, Ligne, lineage: K 252, 693.
Linde, lime tree: K 2064.
Lipsed, lisped: P 264.
List, it pleases: P 583; pret. *liste:* P 102, K 194.
Listes, lists, a place inclosed for combats or tournaments: K 1687.
Litarge, white lead: P 629.
Litel, little: P 438.
Liveree, livery: P 363.
Lode, a load: K 2060.
Lodemenage, pilotage: P 403.
Lodesterre, a loadstar, the polestar: K 1201.
Loken, to see, look: K 925.
Loking, appearance, sight: K 1313.
Lokkes, locks (of hair), curls: P 81.
Lond, Londe, land: P 14.
Longe, Longen, to belong: K 1420.
Longen, to desire, long for: P 12.
Longes, lungs: K 1894.
Looth, odious, hateful, disagreeable, *loath*, unwilling: P 486, K 979.

Lordinges, lordlings (a diminutive of *lord*), sirs, my masters: P 761.
Lore, precept, doctrine, learning: P 527.
Lorn, lost. See **Lese.**
Los, loss: K 1685.
Losten, pl. pret. lost: K 78.
Lovyer, a lover: P 80.
Luce, a pike: P 350.
Lust, pleaseth. See **List.**
Lust, pleasure: P 192.
Lustily, merrily, gaily: K 671.
Lustinesse, pleasure: K 1081.
Lusty, pleasant, joyful, gay: P 80, K 655.
Lyf, life: P 71, K 1918.
Lyfly, in a lifelike way: K 1229.
Lyk, like: P 590, K 443.
Lyte, little: P 494, K 335, 476.
Lyth, lies: K 360.
Lyve, dat. of *lyf*, life; hence *alyve*, in life, alive: K 1840.
Lyves, alive, living: K 1537.

M.

Maad, Mad, pp., made: P 394, 668.
Maat, Mat, dejected, downcast: K 98.
Maist, mayest: K 385.
Maister, a master, chief, a skillful artist: P 261, 576. *Maister-streete* = the chief street: K 2044.
Maistow, mayest thou: K 378.
Maistrye, skill, power, superiority: P 165.
Make, a companion or *mate*: K 1698.
Maked, pp., made: K 1666.
Male, a portmanteau, bag, *mail*: P 694.
Malencolyk, melancholy: K 517.
Manace, Manasing, a threat, menace: K 1145, 1178.
Maner, Manere, manner, kind, sort: P 71, 858, K 1017. *Maner,* sort of (without *of*). "A *maner* deye" = a sort of dey, or dairy-maid.
Manhod, manhood, manliness: P 756.
Mansioun, a mansion: K 1116.
Mantelet, a little mantle, a short mantle: K 1305.
Manye, mania, madness: K 516.
Many oon, many a one: P 317.
Marchant, a merchant: P 270.
Marshal, marshal of the hall: P 752.
Martirdom, torment, martyrdom: K 602.
Martyre, a torment: K 704.
Mary, marrow: P 380.
Mat. See **Maat.**
Matere, matter: P 727, K 401.
Matrimoine, matrimony: K 2237.
Maugree, in spite of: K 311, 1760.
Maunciple, an officer who has the care of purchasing victuals for an inn of court or College: P 544.
Maydenhode, maidenhood: K 1471.
Mayntene, to maintain: K 583.
Mayst, mayest. See **Maist.**
Mede, a reward, *meed*: P 770.
Mede, a mead or meadow, hay land: P 89.
Medlee, of a mixed color: P 328.
Meek, meek: P 69.
Men, one: P 149.
Mencioun, mention: K 35.
Mene (pret. *mente*), to mean, intend: P 793.
Mere, a mare: P 541.
Meriely, pleasantly: P 714.
Mery, Merye, Myrie, pleasant, joyful, merry: P 208, 757, K 641.
Meschaunce, Mischaunce, mischance, misfortune: K 1151.
Meschief, Mescheef, misfortune, what turns out ill: P 493, K 468.
Messager, a messenger: K 633.
Mester, need, necessity: K 482.
Mesurable, moderate: P 435.
Mete, meat, food: P 136.
Mete, to meet: K 666.
Meth, mead, a drink made of honey: K 1421.
Mewe, a *mue* or coop where fowls were fattened: P 349.
Meynee, household, attendants, suite, domestics: K 400.
Minstralcye, minstrelsy: K 1339, 1666.
Mirour, a mirror: K 541.
Mirthe, pleasure, amusement: P 766, 767.
Misboden (pp. of *misbede*), insulted, injured: K 51.

Mischaunce. See **Meschaunce.**
Mishappe, to mishap, turn out badly for: K 788.
Mo, more: *namo,* no more: P 544.
Moche, Mochel, Muchel, adj., much, great; adv., greatly: P 132, 258, 467, K 1992. *Moche and lite* = great and small.
Moevere, mover, first cause: K 2129.
Mone, the moon: P 403.
Mone, a moan, lamentation: K 508.
Month, Moneth, a month: P 92.
Mood, anger: K 902.
Moorning, mourning: K 2110.
Moot (pl. pres. *moten,* pret. *moste, muste*), may, must, ought: P 232, 735, K 27.
Mordring, murdering: K 1143.
More, greater, more: K 898.
Mormal, a cancer, sore, or gangrene: P 386.
Morne, adj., morning: P 358.
Mortreux, a kind of soup or pottage: P 384.
Morwe, Morweninge, morning, morrow: P 334, 780, K 204.
Mosel, muzzle, nose of an animal: K 1293.
Most, most: P 561.
Moste, greatest: K 37.
Moste, must: P 712.
Mote (pl. of *mot*), must: P 742.
Mottelee, motley: P 271.
Mountaunce, amount, value: K 712.
Mous, a mouse: K 403.
Mowe, are able: K 2141.
Murmure, murmuring: K 1601.
Murye, glad, merry: K 528.
Mynde, dat., remembrance: K 544, 1048.
Mynour, a miner: K 1607.
My-selven, myself: P 803.

N.

Nacioun, nation: P 53.
Naker, a kettledrum: K 1653.
Nam = *ne* + *am,* am not: K 264.
Namely, especially: K 410, 1851.
Namo (for *na mo*), no more: P 101, 544.
Narwe, close, narrow: P 625.
Nas = *ne* + *was,* was not: P 251.
Nat, not: P 428.
Nath = *ne* + *hath,* hath not: K 65.
Natheles, nevertheless: P 35.
Ne, adv., not: P 70; conj., nor: P 526. *Ne . . . ne* = neither . . . nor: P 603. *Ne . . . but,* only: K 254.
Nede, needful: P 304.
Nedes, of necessity: K 311. *Nedes-cost* = *nedes-ways,* of necessity: K 619.
Nedeth, must of necessity (die): K 2170.
Neer, Ner, near: K 581, 992; nigher: P 839.
Neet, neat, cattle: P 597.
Nekke, neck: P 238. *Nekke-boon,* bone of the neck.
Nercotikes, narcotics: K 614.
Nere = *ne* + *were,* were not: K 17.
Newe, newly, recently: P 428. *Al newe* = recently, lately; *of newe* = anew.
Nexte, nearest: K 555.
Nightertale, the nighttime: P 97. *-tale* = reckoning, period.
Nis, Nys = *ne* + *is,* is not: K 43.
Noght, not: P 253.
Nolde = *ne* + *wolde,* would not: P 550.
Nombre, number: P 716.
Non, Noon, none: P 449, 654.
Nones, nonce: P 379, 523.
Nonne, a nun: P 118.
Noot, Not = *ne* + *wot,* know not, knows not: P 284, K 181, 482. See **Wost.**
Norissing, Norisshinge, nutriment, nurture: P 437, K 2159.
Nose-thirles, nostrils: P 557.
Not = *ne* + *wot,* knows not. See **Noot.**
Note, a note (in music): P 235.
Not-heed, a crop-head: P 109.
No-thing, in no degree, in no respect, not at all: K 1647.
Nouthe = *nou* + *the* = *now* + *then,* just now, at present. *As nouthe* = at present: P 462.
Ny, nigh, nearly: K 472; *as ny as,* as near (close) as: P 588.

O.

O, one: P 304, 738, K 354. See **Oo.**
Obeisaunce, obedience: K 2116.

Observaunce, respect: K 187, 642.
Of, off: K 1818.
Offende, to hurt, injure, attack: K 51.
Offensioun, offense, hurt, damage: K 1558.
Offertorie, a sentence of Scripture said or sung after the Nicene Creed in the liturgy of the Western Church: P 710.
Offring, the alms collected at the offertory: P 450.
Ofte sythes, oftentimes: P 485.
Oghte, ought: P 660.
Ones, once: P 765.
Oo, Oon, one: P 148. See **O.**
Ook, an oak: K 1432, 2159.
Oon and oon, one by one: P 679.
Oonly, only: K 515.
Opie, opium: K 614.
Oratorie, a closet set apart for prayers or study: K 1047.
Ordeyne, to ordain: K 1695.
Ordinaunce, plan, orderly disposition: K 1709.
Orisoun, prayer, orison: K 1514.
Oth, Ooth, an oath: P 810.
Ounce, a small portion: P 677.
Outhees, outcry, alarm: K 1154.
Outher . . . or = either . . . or: K 627, 628.
Over, upper: P 133.
Overal, everywhere: P 216.
Overest, uppermost: P 290.
Over-riden, ridden over: K 1164.
Overspradde, pret., spread over: P 678.
Over-thwart, athwart, across: K 1133.
Owen, Owene, own: K 2219.
Owher, anywhere: P 653.
Oynement, ointment, unguent: P 631.
Oynouns, onions: P 634.

P.

Pace, to pass: K 2140; pass on: P 36; pass away: K 744; to surpass: P 574.
Pacient, patient: P 484.
Paleys, palace: K 1341.
Palfrey, a horse for the road: P 207.
Pan, the skull, brainpan: K 307.
Paraments, ornamental furniture or clothes: K 1643.
Paramour, by way of love: K 297.
Paramours, with great affection: K 1254.
Parde, Pardee = *par Dieu*, a common oath: P 563.
Pardoner, a seller of indulgences: P 543.
Parfit, perfect: P 72, 422, 532.
Parisshen, a parishioner: P 482.
Parte, party, company: K 1724.
Partrich, a partridge: P 349.
Party, partly: K 195.
Partye, a part: K 2150; adj., partial: K 1799.
Parvys: P 310.
Pas, footpace: P 825; pl. paces: K 1032.
Passant, Passing, surpassing: K 1249, 2027.
Passe, to surpass: P 448.
Payen, pagan: K 1512.
Pees, peace: K 589.
Peire, pair: P 159.
Penaunce, penance, pain, sorrow: K 457.
Penoun, a pennant or ensign (borne at the end of a lance): K 120.
Perce, to pierce: P 2.
Perrye, jewelry: K 2078.
Pers, of a sky-blue color: P 439.
Persoun, a parson or parish priest: P 478.
Perturben, to disturb: K 48.
Peyne, pain, grief: K 439; torture: K 275.
Peyne, Peynen, to take pains, endeavor: P 139.
Peynte, to paint: K 1076.
Peyre, a pair: K 1263.
Pighte, pitched: K 1831.
Piked, adj., trimmed. See **Apyked.**
Piled, stripped of hair, bald: P 627.
Piler, a pillar: K 1135.
Pilour, a plunderer: K 149.
Pilwe-beer, a pillowcase: P 694.
Pinche, to find fault (with): P 326.
Pitaunce, a mess of victuals; properly an additional allowance served to the inmates of religious houses at a high festival: P 224.
Pitous, compassionate: P 143.
Pitously, piteously: K 259.
Plat, plain, flat: K 987.

Plentevous, plentiful: P 344.
Plesaunce, pleasure: K 713.
Plesaunt, pleasant: P 254.
Plesen, to please: P 610.
Pley, play, pleasure: K 267.
Pleye, Pleyen, to play, take one's pleasure: P 236, 758, 772.
Pleyinge, playing, amusement: K 203.
Pleyn, plain: P 790.
Pleyn, full, fully, openly: P 315, 327. *Pleyn bataille* = open battle: K 130.
Pleyne, to complain: K 462.
Pleynen, to complain: K 393.
Pleynly, fully: K 875.
Pocok, peacock: P 104.
Pollax, a halberd, poleax: K 1686.
Pomel, top of the head: K 1831.
Pomely, marked with round spots like an apple, dappled: P 616. *Pomely gray* = apple gray.
Poraille, the poor: P 247.
Pore. See **Povre.**
Port, carriage, behavior: P 69.
Portreiture, a set of pictures: K 1057, 1110.
Portreying, painting: K 1080.
Portreyour, a painter: K 1041.
Pose, to propose, put the question: K 304.
Post, pillar, support: P 214.
Poudre-marchaunt, a kind of spice: P 381.
Poure, to pore, to look close and long: P 185.
Povre, poor: P 225, 478.
Povrely, poorly: K 554.
Poynaunt, pungent: P 352.
Poynt, particle, particular: K 643.
Practisour, practitioner: P 422.
Preche, to preach: P 481.
Preest, Prest, a priest: P 164.
Preisen, Praysen, to praise. See **Prys.**
Presse, to press: K 1672.
Preye, to pray: K 625.
Preyeres, prayers: P 231.
Pricasour, a hard rider: P 189.
Prike, (1) to prick, wound; (2) to spur a horse, to ride hard; (3) to incite, spur on: P 11, K 185, 1820.
Priking, riding: P 191.
Prikke, a point, piercing stroke: K 1748.
Prively, secretly: P 652.
Privitee, privity, privacy, private business: K 553.
Propre, peculiar, own: P 581.
Proven, to prove, prove true, be proved: P 547.
Pryme, the first quarter of the artificial day: K 1331.
Prys, price: P 815; praise, fame: P 67, 237, K 1383.
Pulle, to pluck: P 652. *Pulle a finch* = pluck a pigeon (Lyly has *gull a chuff*), cheat a novice.
Pulled, plucked: P 177.
Pultrye, poultry: P 598.
Purchas, anything acquired (honestly or dishonestly); proceeds of begging: P 256.
Purchasing, conveyancing: P 320.
Purchasour, conveyancer: P 318.
Pure, mere, very: K 421.
Purfiled, embroidered, fringed: P 193.
Purpos, purpose, design: K 1684.
Purs, purse: P 656.
Purtreye, portray, draw: P 96.
Purveiaunce, foresight, providence, plan: K 394, 807, 2153.
Pykepurs, a pickpurse: K 1140
Pyne, torment, pain, grief: K 466, 1524.
Pyne, Pynen, to torment, grieve: K 888.

Q.

Qualm, sickness, pestilence: K 1156.
Queen, a queen: K 24.
Queynt, pp., quenched, pret. *queynte*, was quenched: K 1463, 1476.
Queynte, strange, quaint, uncouth: K 673, 1475.
Quike, alive, quick: K 157; to revive: K 1477.
Quitly, free, at liberty: K 934.
Quod, quoth: K 49, 376.
Quook, quaked, trembled: K 718, 904.
Quyte, to free, as in our phrase "to get *quit* of," hence to set free: K 174; to requite: P 770.

R.

Rad (pp. of *rede*, to read), read: K 1737.

Rage, to play, toy wantonly: P 257; a raging wind: K 1127.
Ransake, to search (for plunder), ransack: K 147.
Rasour, a razor: K 1559.
Rather, sooner: K 295.
Raughte (pret. of *reche*), reached: P 136, K 2057.
Raunsoun, ransom: K 166, 318.
Rebel, rebellious: P 833, K 2188.
Rebelling, rebellion: K 1601.
Recche, Rekke (pret. *roghte, roughte*), to care, take heed to, *reck:* K 540, 1387, 1399.
Recchelees, reckless, careless: P 179.
Reconforte, to comfort: K 1994.
Recorde, to remember, remind: P 829.
Rede, to advise, explain, interpret: K 2213.
Rede, to read: P 709.
Redoutinge, reverence: K 1192.
Redy, ready: P 21, 352.
Reed, plan: K 358.
Reed, Rede, red: P 90, 153, 458.
Reed, counsel, adviser: P 665; also plan, line of conduct.
Refresshe, to refresh: K 1764.
Regne, a kingdom, reign: K 8, 766.
Reherce, to rehearse: P 732.
Rehersing, rehearsal: K 792.
Rekene, Rekne, to reckon: P 401, K 1075.
Rekening, reckoning: P 600.
Remenant, Remenaunt, a remnant: P 724.
Rending, tearing (of hair): K 1976.
Renges, ranks: P 1736.
Renne (pret. *ron, ran;* pret. pl. *ronne;* pp. *ironne, ironnen, ronne, ronnen*), to run: P 1777.
Renning, running: P 551.
Rente, revenue, income, profits: P 373.
Repentaunce, penitence: K 918.
Repentaunt, penitent: P 228.
Replicacioun, a reply: K 988.
Reportour, reporter: P 814.
Rescous, rescue: K 1785.
Rese, to quake, shake: K 1128.
Resons, opinions, reasons: P 274.
Resoun, reason, right: P 37, 847.
Resoune, to resound: K 420.
Respyt, delay: K 90.
Rette, to ascribe, impute: P 726. See **Aretted.**
Reule, rule: P 173; to rule: P 816, K 814.
Reve, steward, bailiff: P 542, 599.
Revel, feasting, merrymaking: K 1859.
Reverence, respect: P 141.
Rewe, to be sorry for, to have compassion or pity on, to *rue:* K 1005, 1375. "*Me reweth*" = I am sorry, grieved.
Rewe, a row, line: K 2008.
Rewfulleste, most sorrowful: K 2028.
Rewthe, ruth, pity: K 56.
Reyn, rain: P 492, 595.
Reyne, to rain: K 677.
Reyse, to make an inroad or military expedition: P 54.
Richesse, riches: K 397.
Riden, rode: P 825.
Rightes, rightly: K 994. *At alle rightes* = rightly in all respects.
Ringen, ring, resound: K 1742.
Rit, rides: K 123.
Roial, royal: K 160.
Roialliche, royally: P 378.
Roially, royally: K 855.
Rome, to walk, roam: K 207.
Ronnen, pret. pl., ran: K 2067.
Rood, rode: P 169. See **Ryden.**
Roos, rose: P 823.
Roost, a roast: P 206.
Rore, to roar: K 2023.
Roste, to roast: P 147, 383.
Rote, a stringed instrument: P 236.
Rote, rote: P 327. *By rote* = by rote.
Rouke, to lie close, cower down, to *ruck:* K 450.
Rouncy, a hackney: P 390.
Roundel, a kind of song: K 671.
Route, a company, assembly: P 622.
Rudeliche, rudely: P 734.
Ruggy, rugged, rough (lit. torn, broken, uneven): K 2025.
Rumbel, a deep roaring noise: K 1121.
Ryden, to ride; pret. *rood;* pret. pl. *riden;* pp. *riden:* P 780, 825.

S.

Sad, sober, staid: K 2127.
Sadly, firmly: K 1744.

Salue, to salute: K 634.
Saluing, salutation: K 791.
Sangwyn, of a blood-red color: P 333.
Sauce, sauce: P 129.
Saugh (pret. of *se*), saw: P 764, 850.
Sautrye, a psaltery, a musical instrument something like a harp: P 296.
Save, save, except: P 683.
Save, the herb sage or *salvia*: K 1855.
Sawceflem, pimpled: P 625.
Sawe, a saying, word, discourse: K 305, 668.
Scalled, having the scall, scale, or scab, scabby, scurfy: P 627. Cf. "*scald* head."
Scape, to escape: K 249.
Scarsly, parsimoniously: P 583.
Scathe, loss, misfortune, harm: P 446.
Sclendre, slender, slight: P 587.
Scole, school, style: P 125.
Scoler, scholar: P 260.
Scoleye, to attend school, to study: P 302.
Seche, Seke, to seek (as in *beseech*): P 784.
Seen, to see: K 56, 415, 499.
Seet (pl. *seten*), sat: K 1217, 2035.
Sege, a siege: K 79.
Seigh (pret. of *se*), saw: P 193.
Seint, saint: P 173.
Seistow, sayest thou: K 267.
Seith, saith, says: P 178.
Seke, to seek: P 13, 17. See **Seche.**
Seke, pl., sick: P 18, 245.
Selde, seldom: K 681.
Selle, give, sell: P 278.
Selve, same: K 1726.
Seme (vb. impers.), to seme: P 39.
Semely, seemly, comely: P 751; becomingly, P 123, 136.
Semicope, a short cope: P 262.
Sendal, a thin silk: P 440.
Sene, visible: P 134. Cf. *y-sene*: P 592.
Sentence, sense, meaning, judgment, matter of a story: P 306, 798, K 1244. "Tales of *sentence* and solas" = instructive and amusing tales.
Sergeant (or **Sergeaunt**) **of lawe** = *serviens ad legem*, a servant of the sovereign for his law business: P 309.
Sermoning, preaching: K 2233.
Servage, bondage: K 1088.
Servant, a servant: K 1377; a lover: K 956.
Servisable, willing to be of service: P 99.
Serye, series, train of argument: K 2209.
Sesoun, season: P 19.
Seten (pret. pl.), sat: K 2035; (pp. of *sette*) sat: K 594.
Sethe, to boil, seethe: P 383.
Seththen, since. See **Sith.**
Seurtee, security, surety: K 746.
Sey, saw. See **Seigh.**
Seyde (pret. of *seye*), said: P 183.
Seye, Seyn (pret. *seyde*), to say: P 181, 468, 738, 787.
Seyh, saw. See **Seigh.**
Seyl, a sail: P 696.
Seyn, to say: P 284.
Seynt, Seynte, holy, a saint: P 697, K 863.
Shaft, an arrow, shaft: K 504.
Shake, pp., shaken: P 406.
Shamfast, modest: K 1197.
Shamfastnesse, modesty: P 840.
Shap, form, shape: K 1031.
Shape, Shapen, to plan, purpose, ordain: P 772, 809.
Shapen (pret. *shop, shoop*), ordained: K 250, 534.
Shaply, fit, likely: P 372.
Shave, shaven: P 588.
She, she: P 446.
Sheef, a sheaf: P 104.
Sheeldes, coins called crowns: P 278.
Sheld, a shield: K 1264.
Shene, bright, fair, beautiful: P 115, K 210.
Shent (pp. of *schende*), hurt, destroyed: K 1896.
Shepne, stables: K 1142.
Shere, shears: K 1559.
Shet, pp., shut: K 1739.
Shine, shin, leg: P 386.
Shines, shins, legs: K 421.
Shipman, a sailor: P 388.
Shires ende = end of a *shire* or county: P 15.
Shirreve, the governor (reeve) of

a shire or county: P 359. See **Reve.**

Shivere, to be shattered: K 1747.

Sho, a shoe: P 253.

Shode, the temple (of the head), properly the parting of the hair of a man's head, *not* the hair itself: K 1149.

Sholde, Shulde, should: P 249.

Sholdred, shouldered, having shoulders: P 549.

Shoon (pret. of *shine*), shone: P 198.

Shorte, to shorten: P 791. See **Shere.**

Shortely, shortly, briefly: K 627.

Shortly, briefly: K 627.

Shrighte, Shryked, shrieked: K 1959.

Shul, pl., shall: K 889.

Shulder, a shoulder: P 678.

Sight, providence: K 814.

Sik, sick: K 742. See **Seke.**

Siker, sure, certain: K 2191.

Sikerly, surely, certainly, truly: P 137.

Siknesse, sickness: K 398, 453.

Sin, since: P 601. Short for *sithen.*

Sit, sits: K 741.

Sith, Sithen, since, afterward: K 72, 434, 545, 663, 1244.

Slake, slow: K 2043. See **Aslake.**

Slaughtre, a slaughter: K 1173.

Slee, Sleen, to slay: P 661, K 364.

Sleep (pret. of *slepe*), slept: P 98, 397.

Sleere, a slayer: K 1147.

Sleeth, slays: K 260.

Sleighte, contrivance, craft: P 604.

Slepen, to sleep: P 10.

Slepy, causing sleep: K 529.

Sleves, sleeves: P 193.

Slider, slippery: K 406.

Slogardye, sloth: K 184.

Slough, Slow (pret. of *sle*), slew: K 122, 1608.

Slyly, prudently, wisely (used in a good sense): K 586.

Smal, Smale, small: P 9, 146, 153.

Smerte, adj., smarting, sharp, grievous: P 149; adv., sharply, smartly.

Smerte (pret. *smerte*), to pain, hurt, displease: P 239, 534, K 536.

Smoking, perfuming, causing to be perfumed: K 1423.

Smoot, Smot (pret. of *smite*), smote: P 149, K 846.

Smothe, smooth, smoothly: P 676.

Snewede, *snowed,* swarmed, abounded: P 345.

Snibbe, to reprove, snub: P 523.

So, so: P 102.

Soberly, sad, solemn: P 289.

Socour, succor: K 60.

Sodeynliche, Sodeynly, suddenly: K 260, 717.

Solas, solace, mirth: P 798.

Solempne, festive: P 209; important: P 364.

Solempnely, pompously: P 274.

Solempnitee, feast, festivity: K 12.

Som, some: P 640. *Som . . . som* = one . . . other: K 397, 399.

Som-del, somewhat: P 174.

Somer, summer: P 394.

Somnour, an officer employed to summon delinquents to appear in ecclesiastical courts, now called an apparitor: P 543.

Sondry, sundry, various: P 14.

Sone, soon: K 1412, 1812.

Sone, a son: P 79.

Song, pret., sang: K 197.

Songe, pp., sung: P 266, 711.

Sonne, the sun: P 7, K 5, 204.

Soor, adj., sore: K 1837.

Soote, sweet: P 1.

Sooth, Sothe, truth; adj., true: P 845, K 767.

Soothly, truly: P 117, 468.

Sop (in wyn), wine with bread soaked in it: P 334.

Soper, supper: P 348, K 33.

Sore, adv., sorely: P 230, K 536.

Sort, destiny, chance: P 844.

Sorwe, sorrow: K 361, 419.

Sorweful, sorrowful: K 212.

Sory, sorrowful: K 1146, 1152. "*Sory* comfort" = discomfort; "*sory* grace" = misfortune.

Sotil, subtle, fine-wrought: K 196; thin: K 1172.

Soule, soul: P 781, K 1005.

Soun, a sound: P 674.

Souple, supple, pliant: P 203.

Sovereyn, high, supreme, sovereign: P 67.

Sowne, to sound: P 275, 565; sound: K 1564.

Sowninge in, tending to: P 307.

Chaucer uses *sownen into goode* = to tend to good.

Spak, spake: P 124.

Spare, to refrain, abstain from: P 192, 737.

Sparre, bar, bolt (Eng. *spar*): K 132, 218.

Sparth, a battle-ax, or halberd: K 1662.

Sparwe, a sparrow: P 626.

Special, "in special," specially: P 444.

Spede (pret. *spedde*), to speed, hasten, prosper: P 769, K 359.

Speken (pret. *spak*), to speak: P 142.

Spere, a spear: K 781, 795.

Spores, spurs: P 473.

Sprad, pp., spread: K 2045.

Springen, to spring: K 1013, 1749.

Spronge (pp. of *springe*), sprung, widely spread: K 579.

Spyced, sophisticated, or scrupulous: P 526.

Spycerye, spices: K 2077. *Spices* = species, kinds.

Squyer, a squire: P 79.

Stablissed, established: K 2137.

Stalke, to step slowly and stealthily: K 621.

Starf (pret. of *sterve*), died: K 75.

Steer, a yearling bullock, a *steer* or stirk: K 1291.

Stele (pret. *stal,* pp. *stole, stolen*), to steal: P 562.

Stemed, shone: P 202.

Stenten (pret. *stente,* pp. *stent*), to stop, cease: K 45, 510.

Stepe, bright, glittering (not deep or sunken, as it is generally explained): P 201.

Sterre, a star: P 268.

Stert, start: K 847. *At a stert* = in a moment, immediately.

Sterte (pret. *sterte,* pp. *stert*), to start, leap, escape: K 186, 222, 644.

Sterve (pret. *starf,* pp. *y-storve, storven*): K 286.

Steven, Stevene, (1) voice, sound: K 1704; (2) a time appointed by previous agreement: K 666.

Stewe, a fish pond: P 350.

Stille, quietly, secretly: K 145.

Stint, imp. sing., stop: K 1490.

Stinte (pret. *stinte*), to stop: K 1563.

Stith, an anvil: K 1168.

Stiward, a steward: P 579.

Stoke, to stick, stab: K 1688.

Stole, pp., stolen: K 1769.

Stomble, to stumble: K 1755.

Stonde, Stonden (pret. *stood,* pp. *stonde, stonden*), to stand: P 88, 745,

Stongen, pp. stung: K 221.

Stoon, stone: P 774.

Stoor, Store, stock (of a farm): P 598.

Stot, a stallion, a *stoat* (which also signifies a weasel): P 615.

Stounde, a moment, a short space of time: K 354.

Stoute, strong, brave: K 1296.

Straughte (pret. of *strecche*), stretched: K 2058.

Straunge, foreign: P 13, 464.

Stree, straw: K 2060.

Streem, stream, river: P 464.

Strepe, to strip: K 148.

Streyt, close, narrow, stinted, *strict:* P 174.

Streyte, closely: P 457.

Strike (of flax), a hank: P 676.

Strof (pret. of *strive*), strove, disputed, vied with: K 180.

Strond, strand: P 13.

Strook, a stroke: K 843.

Stryf, strife, contest: K 1580.

Stubbes, stumps, trunks: K 1120.

Subtilly, craftily: P 610.

Suffisaunce, sufficiency: P 490.

Suffisaunt, sufficient: K 773.

Surcote, an upper coat: P 617.

Sustene, to sustain: K 1135.

Suster, (pl. *sustren*), a sister: K 13, 161.

Swelte, fainted: K 498.

Swerd, a sword: P 112, K 717.

Swere (pret. *swor, swoor;* pp. *y-swore, y-sworen*), to swear: P 454, K 963. We have the same root in an-*swer.*

Swete, sweet: P 5, 265, K 1569.

Swich, such: P 3; *swich a,* so great a: K 4.

Swink, labor, toil: P 188, 540.

Swinken, to labor, toil: P 186.

Swinkere, a laborer: P 531.

Swor, Swore. See **Swere.**

Swough, the raging of the elements, a storm: K 1121.

Swowne, to swoon: K 55, 1961.

Swymbul, a moaning, sighing sort of noise, caused by the wind (or perhaps a shivering movement): K 1121.
Swyn, sing. and pl., swine: P 598.
Syke, a sigh: K 1062; to sigh, K 682, 2127.
Sythe, Sythes, times: P 485, K 1019.

T.

Taas. See **Tas.**
Tabard, the sleeveless coat on which arms were embroidered; a herald's coat of arms: P 20, 541.
Taffata, taffeta: P 440.
Taille, a tally, an account scored in two notched pieces of wood: P 570.
Tak, imper., take: K 226.
Take, pp., taken: K 1789.
Takel, an arrow: P 106.
Tale, speech, discourse, story: P 831. *Telle tale* = take account of, estimate.
Talen, to tell tales: P 722.
Tapicer, an upholsterer: P 362.
Tappestere, a female tapster: P 241.
Targe, a target or shield: P 471.
Tas, heap: K 147, 151, 162.
Tathenes = to Athens: K 165.
Teche, Techen, to teach, direct: P 308.
Tendite, to endite, tell: K 3[illegible]1.
Tene, vexation, annoyance: K 2248.
Teres, tears: K 422.
Testers, headpieces, or helmets: K 1641.
Thabsence, the absence: K 381.
Than, Thanne, then: P 12.
Thank, thanks: P 612.
Thankes, Thonkes, the genitive of *thank:* K 768, 1249. Used adverbially with the personal pronouns (possessive): *his thankes,* he being willing; *hir thankes,* they being willing.
Tharmes, the arms: K 2058.
Tharray, the array: P 716.
Thavys, the advice: K 2218.
Theffect, the effect: K 331.
Thencens, the incense: K 1419.
Thenchauntements, the enchantments: K 1086.
Thencrees, the increase: P 275.
Thentree, the entrance: K 1125.
Ther, there: P 43; where: P 547. *Ther as* = where that: P 34, 172.
Therto, besides: P 153, 757.
Thestat, the state or rank: P 716.
They, they: P 475.
Thider, thither: K 405.
Thikkeherd, thick-haired: K 1660.
Thilke, the like, that: P 182, K 335, 1525.
Thing, a deed, a legal document: P 325.
Thinke, Thynke, to seem. It is used impersonally, as, me *thinketh* = it seems to me: P 37; me *thoughte* = it seemed to me: P 385; him *thoughte* = it appeared to him: P 682; us *thoughte*: P 785.
Thirle, to pierce: K 1852.
Thise, pl., these: P 701, K 673.
Tho, pl., the, those: P 498, K 265, 1493.
Thó, then: K 135.
Thoffice, the office: K 2005.
Thombe, thumb: P 563.
Thonder, thunder: P 492.
Thorisoun, the orison or prayer: K 1403.
Thral, slave, serf, one enslaved: K 694.
Thred, Threed, thread: K 1172.
Thredbare, threadbare: P 260.
Thresshe, to thrash: P 536.
Threste, to thrust, press: K 1754.
Thridde, third: K 605.
Thryes, thrice: P 63.
Thurgh, through: K 362.
Thurgh-fare, a thoroughfare: K 1989.
Thurgh-girt, pierced through: K 152. See **Girt.**
Til, to: K 620.
To, at, gone to: P 30.
To (pl. *toon*), toe: K 1868.
To-, a verbal prefix, in twain.
To-breste, burst asunder: K 1753. See **Breste.**
To-brosten, burst or broken in pieces: K 1833, 1899.
To-hewen, hewed or cut in pieces: K 1751.
Tollen, to take toll or payment: P 562.
To-morwe, to-morrow: P 780.
Tonge, tongue: P 265, 712.

Tonne-greet, having the circumference as great as a tun: K 1136.
Top, head: P 590.
Torets, small rings or swivels: K 1294.
Torne, to turn: K 630.
To-shrede, cut in shreds: K 1751.
Toun, town: P 478.
Tour, tower: K 172, 419.
Touret, turret: K 1051.
Trace, track, path: P 176.
Trapped, having trappings: K 2032.
Trappures, trappings of a horse: K 1641.
Traunce, a trance: K 714.
Trays, the traces by which horses draw, horse harness: K 1281.
Trede, to tread: K 2164.
Tresoun, treason: K 1143.
Trespas, trespass: K 960.
Tresse, a tress, plait: K 191.
Tretee, treaty: K 430.
Tretys, long and well proportioned: P 1:2.
Trewe, true: P 531.
Trewely, truly: P 481.
Trompe, a trumpet: P 674, K 1316.
Tronchoun, a headless spear or broken shaft of a spear: K 1757.
Trouthe, truth: P 46, 763; troth: K 752.
Trowe, to believe: P 155, 524. *I trowe* = I think it to be true.
Trussed up, packed up: P 681.
Tukked, tucked up: P 621.
Turneyinge, a tournament: K 1669.
Tweye, two, twain: P 704, 792, K 40, 270.
Twinne, to depart, separate: P 835.
Two, two: P 639.
Tydes, tides: P 401.

U.

Unce, a small portion: P 677.
Uncouth, unknown, rare, *uncouth:* K 1639. See **Couthe.**
Undergrowe, undergrown: P 156.
Undertake, to affirm: P 288.
Unknowe, unknown: P 126, K 548.
Unkonning, unknowing, not *cunning* (knowing), ignorant: K 1535.
Unset, not at a set time, not appointed: K 666.
Unwist, unknown: K 2119. See **Wite.**
Unyolden, not having yielded: K 1784.
Up-haf (pret. of *upheve*), upheaved, uplifted: K 1570. See **Heve.**
Up-right, flat on the back: K 1150.
Up-riste, dat., uprising: K 193.
Up-so-doun, upside down: K 519.
Up-sterte, upstarted, arose: K 441.
Up-yaf, gave up: K 1569.

V.

Vasselage, valor, courage (displayed in the service rendered by a *vassal*): K 2196.
Vavasour, a middle-class landholder; an esquire: P 360.
Venerye, hunting: P 166, K 1450.
Venim, poison, venom: K 1893, 1896.
Ventusyng, cupping, a surgical term: K 1889.
Verdit, verdict, judgment, sentence: P 787.
Vernicle, a copy of the sacred handkerchief on which the impression of Christ's face was distinguishable: P 685.
Verraily, truly: P 338.
Verray, Verrey, true, very: P 72, 422.
Vese, a rush of wind, draft, gush; lit. an impulse: K 1127.
Vestimens, vestments: K 2090.
Veyn, vain: K 236.
Veyne-blood, blood of the veins: K 1889.
Viage, voyage: P 77, 723.
Vigilyes, vigils: P 377.
Vileinye, unbecoming conduct or talk, disgrace: P 70, 726, K 84.
Vitaille, victuals: P 569, 749.
Vouche-sauf, to vouchsafe, grant: P 807, 812.
Voyden, to expel: K 1893.

W.

Waar, aware, wary. See **War.**
Wake-pleyes, ceremonies attending the vigils for the dead: K 2102.
Walet, a wallet: P 681, 686.
Wan, won, conquered: K 131. See **Winne.**
Wanhope, despair: K 391.

Wanie, to decrease, diminish: K 1220.
Wantown, wanton, free, unrestrained: P 208.
Wantownesse, wantonness: P 264.
War, aware, cautious, prudent: P 309. "I was *war*" = I perceived: P 157.
War him (infin. governed by *oghte*), to beware: P 662.
Wastel-breed, bread-cake: P 147.
Waterlees, without water: P 180.
Wawes, waves: K 1100.
Wayke, pl., weak: K 29.
Waylaway, alas! welaway! well-aday: K 80.
Waymenting, Waymentinge, a lamentation, wailing: K 137, 1063.
Wayte, to be on the lookout for, to look for: P 525, 571, K 364. See **Awayt.**
Webbe, a weaver: P 362.
Wed (dat. *wedde*), pledge, security; *to wedde*, in pledge, as a pledge: K 360.
Wedden, to wed: K 974.
Wede, clothing: K 148.
Weel, well: K 68, 1265.
Weep, wept: K 1487.
Wel, adv., full, very: K 653; much: K 396.
Wele, weal, prosperity, wealth: K 37.
Welle, source, fountain: K 2179.
Wende, weened, thought: K 411.
Wende, Wenden, to go, pass away: P 16, 21, K 1356.
Wene, to ween, think: K 797.
Wepe, Wepen (pret. *weep*, *wep*, pp. *wepen*), to weep: P 144, 230.
Wepne, a weapon: K 733.
Were, to defend, guard: K 1692.
Wered, wore: P 75, 564
Werken, Wirche, to work: P 779, K 1901.
Werre, war: P 47, K 429.
Werreye, Werreyen, to make war against: K 626, 686.
Werte, a wart: P 555.
Wessh (pret. of *wasche*), washed: K 1425.
Wete, wet, moist: K 422, 1480.
Wette, wetted: P 129.
Wex, wax: P 675.
Wex (pret. *wexe*), increased, became: K 504.
Wexing, growing, increasing: K 1220.
Wey, Weye, a way: P 34, 467.
Weyeth, weigheth, esteems: K 923.
Weyle, to wail, to cry *wei!* or *woe!*: K 363.
Weymentinge, a lamentation: K 44.
Whan, Whanne, when: P 15, 18, 179.
What, wherefore, why, lo: P 184, 854.
Wheel, wheel: K 68, 1165.
Whelkes, pimples, blotches: P 632.
Wher, where: K 1952.
Wher, whether: K 1394.
Whether, whether, which of two: K 998.
Which, what. *Which a* = what a, K 1817.
Whippeltre, the cornel tree: K 2065.
Whyl, whilst: P 35, 397. Cf. *whyle*, *time*.
Whylom, formerly, once: K 1, 1545.
Whyt, white: P 238. Comp. *whitter*.
Widwe, a widow: P 253.
Wight, any living creature; a person, male or female: P 71, 326.
Wighte, weight: K 1287.
Wikke, wicked, bad, untoward: K 229.
Wilne, to desire: K 751.
Wiltou, wilt thou: K 298.
Wilwe, willow tree: K 2064.
Wimpel, a covering for the neck: P 151.
Winged, winged: K 527.
Winne (pret. *wan*, *won*, pp., *wonne*, *wonnen*), to win, obtain, gain: K 759.
Winnyng, gain, profit: P 275.
Wirche, to work: K 1901. See **Werken.**
Wis = *ywis*, certainly: K 1928. *As wis* = as certainly, as truly.
Wisly, truly: K 1376.
Wit, understanding, judgment, wisdom: P 279, 746.
Wite, to know (1st and 3d pers. sing. indic. *wot*, *woot*; 2d pers. *wost*; pl. *witen*, *wyten*; pret. *wiste*), to learn: K 402;

Withholde, maintained: P 511.
Withouten, without: P 538; besides: P 461.
Withseyn, Withseye, to gainsay: P 805, K 282.
Witing, knowledge: K 753.
Wo, Woo, sorrow, woe: K 1766; lament: K 42; sorrowful, grieved, displeased: P 351.
Wode. See **Wood**.
Wodebynde, woodbine: K 650.
Wofullere, the more sorrowful: K 482.
Wol, Wole, will: P 42; *wolde*, would: P 144; pl. *wolden*: P 27.
Woln, Wolle (pl. of *wol*), will: K 1263.
Woltow, wilt thou: K 686.
Wommanhede, womanly feeling: K 890.
Wonder, wonderful: K 1215; wonderfully: P 483, K 796.
Wonderly, wonderfully: P 84.
Wone, custom, usage: P 335, K 182.
Wone, to dwell: P 388, K 2069.
Woning, a dwelling, habitation: P 606.
Wonne, Wonnen (pp. of *winne*), conquered, obtained: P 51, K 19.
Wood, mad: P 582, K 471.
Woodly, madly: K 443.
Woodnesse, madness: K 1153.
Wook, awoke: K 535.
Woot (1st pers.), know: P 389, 659; (3d pers.), knows: K 28.
Worse, worse: K 366.
Worship, honor: K 1054.
Worshipe, to honor, to pay proper respect to another's *worth*: K 1393.
Worthinesse, bravery: P 50.
Worthy, brave: P 47, 68.
Wost, knowest. See **Wite**.
Wostow, knowest thou: K 305.
Wrastle, to wrestle: K 2103.
Wrastling, wrestling: P 548.
Wrecche, a wretch, wretched: K 73, 248.
Wreke, to revenge, avenge, *wreak*: K 103.
Wrethe (a derivative from the vb. to *writhe*), a wreath: K 1287.
Wrighte (literally a workman), a carpenter: P 614.
Wrooth, angry: P 451.
Wyd, wide: P 491.
Wyde, pl., wide: P 557.
Wyf, wife, woman: P 445.
Wyves, pl., wives: P 234.
Wyke, a week: K 681.
Wyn, wine: P 334.
Wys, wise: P 68, 309.
Wyse, pl., wise: P 569.
Wyse, mode, manner: K 480, 882. See **Gyse**.
Wyte, Wyten, know. See **Wite**.
Wyve, dat. of *wyf*.

Y.

Y-, a prefix used especially with the pp.
Yaf (pret. of *yeve* or *yive*), gave; hence, cared: P 177.
Yate, a gate: K 577.
Ybete, beaten: K 1304; beaten on: K 121.
Y-bore, borne, carried: P 378; *y-born*, born: K 161.
Y-bounden, bound: K 291.
Y-brent, burnt: K 88.
Y-broght, brought: K 253.
Y-buried, buried: K 88.
Y-chaped, having *chapes* or caps of metal at the end of a sheath: P 366.
Y-clenched, clinched, fastened: K 1133.
Y-cleped, Yclept, called: P 376, 410, K 9.
Y-come, come: P 77.
Y-corve, cut: K 1155.
Y-don, Y-do, done: K 167, 1676.
Y-drawe, drawn: P 396, K 86, 1784.
Ydriven, driven: K 1149.
Y-dropped, bedropped, covered with drops: K 2026.
Ye, yea, the answer to a question asked in the affirmative form: K 890; *yis, yes*, being the affirmative answer to a question asked in the negative form.
Yë, eye: P 10. (Dissyllabic; pronounced *y-e*, with *y* like *i* in *machine*, and *e* like Ger. final *e*.)
Yeddinges, songs; properly the gleeman's songs: P 237.
Yeer, Yer, year: P 347, K 523; pl. *yeer*, years: P 82.
Yeldhalle = *geldhall*, a guildhall: P 370.

Yeldyng, yielding, return, produce: P 596.
Yelpe, to boast: K 1380. (Eng. *yelp.*)
Yelwe, Yelow, yellow: K 191, 1071.
Yeman, a yeoman, commoner, a feudal retainer: P 101.
Yerd, Yerde, rod: P 149, K 529.
Yet now = just now: K 298.
Yeve, Yeven, Yive, to give: P 223.
Y-falle, fallen: P 25.
Y-fetered, fettered: K 371.
Y-founde, found: K 353.
Y-go, gone: P 286.
Y-grounde, pp., ground, sharpened: K 1691.
Y-holde, pp., esteemed, held: K 1516, 2100.
Yifte, gift: K 1340.
Yive, Yiven, to give: P 225; pp., given: K 57.
Y-knowe, known: P 423.
Y-lad (pp. of *leden*), carried (in a cart): P 530.
Y-laft (pp. of *leven*), left: K 1888.
Y-liche, pl., alike: K 1668.
Y-lyk, alike: P 592, K 1876.
Ylyke, alike: P 681.
Y-maked, pp., made: P 1207, 1997.
Y-met, pp., met: P 1766.
Y-meynd (pp. of *menge*), mingled, mixed: K 1312.
Y-nogh, enough: P 373.
Yolden (pp. of *yelden*), yielded: K 2194.
Yolle, to yell: K 1814.
Yond, yonder: K 241.
Yong, Yonge, young: P 7, 79, 213.
Yore, of a long time. *Yore agoon* = a long time ago: K 955; *of yore,* in olden time.
Youling, yelling: K 420.
Yow, you: P 34, 38.
Y-payed, paid: K 944.
Y-pinched, tightly plaited: P 151.
Y-preved, proved to be: P 485.
Y-raft (pp. of *reven*), bereft: K 1157.
Y-ronne, run: P 8; clustered: K 1307.
Y-ronnen (pp. of *rennen*), run, coagulated: K 1835.
Y-scalded, scalded: K 1162.
Ysene, adj. pl., visible: P 592. (Distinct from the pp. *y-seen.*)
Y-served, pp., served: K 105.
Y-set, appointed: K 777.
Y-shave, shaven: P 690.
Y-shorn (pp. of *sheren*, to shear), cut: P 589.
Y-shrive, shriven: P 226.
Y-slayn, slain: K 1850.
Y-spreynd (pp. of *sprenge*), sprinkled, scattered: K 1311.
Y-stiked, pierced: K 707.
Y-storve (pp. of *sterven*), dead: K 1156.
Y-sworn, sworn: K 274.
Y-taught, taught: P 127.
Y-teyd, tied: P 457.
Y-turned, turned: K 380, 1204.
Y-wedded, wedded: K 2240.
Y-wimpled, decked with a wimple: P 470.
Y-wont, wont, accustomed. See Wone.
Y-wroght (pp. of *werken, werchen*), worked, wrough, made: P 196
Y-wrye, covered: K 2046.

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